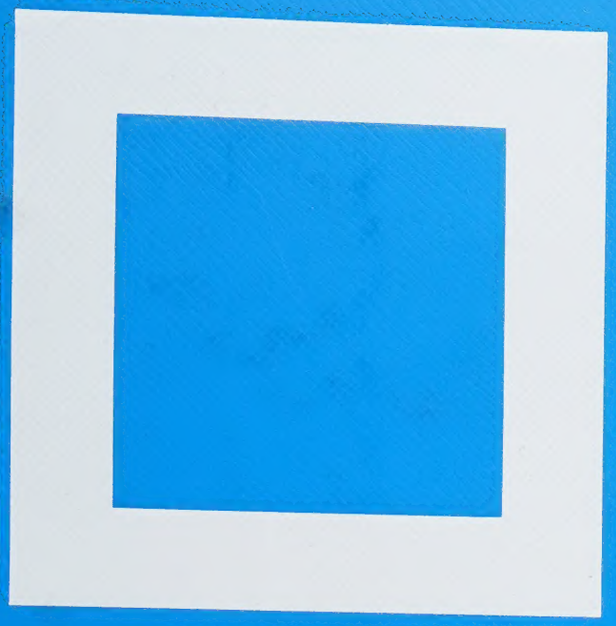

CHURCH PLANNING

Office for Church Life and Leadership

OCL

A MANUAL
FOR USE IN THE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
REVISED EDITION

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Office for Church Life and Leadership

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introduction

Church Planning was first published in 1976. It had evolved out of a project started by the former Council for Lay Life and Work and continued by the Office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ. It was designed to help strengthen the life and mission of the local church through intentional and effective planning. Since its publication it has been widely used by local churches, groups and committees within the churches, associations and conferences.

In 1978 *Church Planning* was updated with additional designs for the planning components section. This present edition reflects refinements in the organization of the material, a reconceptualization of planning facilitators, and additional designs for the planning components.

This edition of *Church Planning* is divided into three sections:

Section A is an introduction to church planning. It defines what church planning is and describes how to organize and administer it. A bibliography and order form are included.

Section B describes the eleven components in the planning process. Included are design options for each component which a local church can use.

Section C contains the organizational theory which undergirds the basic perspective and specific processes described in *Church Planning.*

On one side of each sectional divider is an introduction to that section. On the other side is a glossary of key terms used throughout *Church Planning.* On one side of each component divider in *Section B* are an introduction to the component and a statement of the component's purpose. On the reverse side is an explanation of how that component relates to the phases of the power cycle.

The Office for Church Life and Leadership expresses its appreciation to all the churches and persons who helped make *Church Planning* a reality. A special word of appreciation is given to the following persons for their contributions to *Church Planning*: George Barber, Paul Baumer, Carl Beyer, Edward Brueggemann, Norman Bucher, Frank Chong, Jack Coates, Richard Diehl, Theodore Edquist, Gayle Engel, Don Hartman, David Holsinger, Harold Hufendick, Jerry Jekel, John Long, Jeanette Lopez, Duane Meyer, Phyllis Mitman, William Nix, Charles Ross, Harry Schuster, William Schwab, Jack Seville, Kurt Simon, Stephen Steiner, Susie Telyihann, Alfred Williams, and the Consultant Services Network of the Central Atlantic Conference.

The Office for Church Life and Leadership commends this resource to you. As you use it, or after, we would welcome your comments about it and your suggestions for designs for any component.

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what is in this section

This section defines church planning and provides a theological perspective on why church planning is done. The concepts of power and the power cycle are introduced. An eleven-component planning process is outlined. The practical questions of who does church planning and how it is organized are dealt with in detail.

how to use this section

This section presents an overview of church planning and provides useful background information for persons who are considering whether or not to engage in such an effort in their local church.

Once a congregation decides to engage in a planning endeavor this section should be studied by those who will be responsible for administering the planning.

glossary

planning. Projecting and developing a course of action for accomplishing desired outcomes. Planning is deciding what kind of future is wanted, and then establishing the means to get there.

planning facilitators. Persons who are skilled and trained to assist local churches with the task of organizing and administering congregational planning.

official board. The group within the local church which constitutionally is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the congregation. It is variously called council, consistory, board of deacons, cabinet, etc.

planning group. A task force of the congregation which has responsibility for organizing and facilitating congregational planning. When **planning facilitators** are used, this is the group which coordinates their work.

congregational units. All the organized committees, boards, organizations and task forces of the congregation. They include but are not limited to such groups as the committee on Christian education, stewardship committee, evangelism committee, women's fellowship, men's fellowship, youth fellowship, elders, trustees, etc.

formal leadership. The leaders of the **congregational units** — officers of all the organizations with the congregation and, in some cases, all members of certain boards and task forces.

directions. The major areas in which a congregation intends to work.

goals. Statements describing the specific and measurable outcomes desired related to the **directions** in which the congregation has decided to go.

plan of action. A set of specific steps or activities to be taken in order to achieve the **goals**.

design. An arrangement of elements which structures the use of time in a group. A series of steps are put together so that an activity is created which has a specific beginning and ending and is intended to accomplish a purpose. When several of these structured activity **designs** are put together with breaks, meals, transitions, and other group activities, a meeting **design** is created. When you are engaged in this task you are designing.

planning period. A specific period of time devoted to planning which results in a congregational **plan of action**.

program period. A specific period of time devoted to the implementation of a congregational **plan of action**.

church planning

An underlying assumption of *Church Planning* is that a church is a group of people who are together because they have been called together by God and because they have chosen to be together. In both instances, being together is for a purpose or purposes. We commonly describe the purpose of the church as ministry and mission. A related assumption is that a church is empowered for its ministry and mission — that is, it has the ability and resources to act and has available to it such help as may be required. The sources of this power are God and the dynamic relationship that exists among the people God has brought together. Power, as used here, means the energy, ability, and resources to act. However, sometimes power is unrecognized and unused.

Thus, another assumption is that every local church has the responsibility to try to discern its God-given ministry and mission; to identify present and available resources for that ministry and mission, and to organize those resources to be about its task. This is church planning. We can expect to be guided by the Holy Spirit, but that does not alter our responsibility to be intentional about our actions as well. To be intentional means to plan, to organize, and to work out ways together in which congregational life can be even more faithful.

The Apostle Paul has suggested that the church has been given gifts so that we may "no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of persons, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles." (Ephesians 4:14) An alternative to a style of life which intentionally and wisely uses God's gifts can be a life characterized by drifting, a life controlled by external forces rather than one motivated and guided by an inner sense of direction and purpose. Without intentionality one is more likely to latch on to fads or gimmicks without a clear sense of where one is coming from (identity) or where one is going (purpose). This is true of churches as well as individuals.

Church Planning is intended as a tool to assist churches and their leaders in being intentional about their lives and their leadership. It contains specific action processes to enable a church to plan its future and to follow through on the plans in a systematic manner. It also offers a theological and rational explanation of the theories and assumptions which lie behind the processes.

The material is presented in terms of group or organizational power. The group or organization assumed throughout is the local church. However, much of the material is applicable to any organization or group of people.

Power is intentional when it is used in the pursuit of purposes and goals. We commonly speak of churches as being "strong" — powerful — when they seem to be active and achieving, and of churches as "weak" — powerless — when they seem to be passive and can point to little achievement. The former often are characterized by high morale, enthusiasm, energy and expectancy. The latter often are characterized by low morale, lethargy, disunity, and resignation.

Power to act can be developed or "built" in a congregation. This development can be understood as a four-step process and can be illustrated visually by a "power cycle" diagram. All material in *Church Planning* is organized around this concept of the power cycle.

On page *A-3* the power cycle is illustrated and explained. Read it in the following sequence: **evaluation, recommendation, decision, action.** Once this four-step sequence is

complete it begins anew. Thus, **evaluation** follows **action**, beginning a new cycle. We believe that all human activity occurs within this cycle, but usually unconsciously. All of us recognize needs, discard some options for meeting them, choose other options, and act on them. But without being aware of how we do this, we may limit our effectiveness. Have we ignored deeper or conflicting needs? Are there options for meeting them other than those which automatically occur to us? When we chose our option, did we choose it using adequate criteria? Can we realistically put it into action? Did we really look at the results? We believe that a church which goes through this four-step sequence of the power cycle regularly and intentionally, both as a total congregation and as individual units within the congregation, begins to take on characteristics we describe as health, vitality, and strength.

Church Planning is about congregational **planning** . It attempts to relate each step, each activity, to the power cycle. A variety of simple processes are described for use at each stage of the power cycle as it relates to congregational **planning**.

Church Planning has as its purpose leadership empowerment. The responsibility of leaders of a congregation is to insure that the functions described by the power cycle are being fulfilled, and being fulfilled in the proper sequence. Thus, as leaders understand their task, and are provided tools to be about their task, they are empowered. That is, they have the motivation, skill, and energy to act.

Many leaders of congregations, both lay and clergy, are very effective. Many have developed their abilities by study and training; others seem to have a natural capability for leadership. Most are effective because of a combination of training and natural ability. *Church Planning* can be used as a tool for assisting leaders of local churches to think about their leadership task, to talk about it and explain it to others, and to discover some aids for strengthening them in their regular duties.

1. **evaluation.** Initially, planning begins with evaluation. Evaluation is going on all the time in a church, although this often is informal, random, and unorganized. Here evaluation is done through an intentional process involving the members of the congregation in assessing it — its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, potential, dreams, and visions. It means being in touch with one's history, one's community and neighborhood, trends, feelings, perceptions. It means looking at what is currently going on, what it means, what assets and resources are available, what relationships exist. It means, ultimately, discerning what God has done and is doing in this congregation of God's people.

2. **recommendation.** Once a congregation has a realistic perception of itself, where it is coming from (its story, history, identity), and where it would like to go (dreams, hopes, visions), it then develops possible courses of action for itself. The key to developing recommendations is to produce as many alternatives or optional courses of action and methods for engaging in the action as possible.

3. **decision.** Once alternative recommendations have been developed, decisions need to be made from among them about which courses will be followed. One pitfall in organizational life is the temptation to attempt more action than energy, personnel, or resources are available to support. Recommendations which come before the official decision makers, therefore, should carry with them their implications about needed support and resources as well as their relationship to other aspects of the life of the congregation. When decisions are made they should include the delegation of responsibility for implementing the actions they call for and information about the resources available to those who will be responsible for the action.

4. **action.** Action follows decision. Those who are responsible for the action should have a clear understanding of the assignment and its relationship to the overall purpose and goals of the church. Action is facilitated if it is closely monitored through careful attention to schedules and timelines and by regular and visible support of those responsible.

the power cycle

the planning process

Planning is organizing a map of how to acomplish something desired. We all do it to some degree as a natural course of events. Sometimes we are very elaborate. At other times we plan without consciously setting out to do it. In either case we go through a progression of steps.

Church Planning identifies and is built around eleven components in the **planning** process. Taken together, those components make the **planning** process described here uniquely "church planning." Separately, a number of them are found in various secular **planning** processes.

Following are short descriptions of each component to provide an overview of the **planning** process, and then a more complete rationale. *Section B* contains step-by-step **designs** for working through each component. You may want to refer to that section as you study the next few pages.

1. **worship**

   involving those engaged in **planning** in acknowledging their relationship with God.

2. **community building**

   Getting people sufficiently comfortable with one another so they can enter into significant dialogue during the **planning** effort.

3. **faith perspective**

   Exploring what it means to be a church.

4. **data gathering and interpretation**

   Surfacing and interpreting information which can inform and influence the choices to be made about the future.

5. **direction selection**

   Choosing, from all the possible future directions, a few high priorities on which to work.

6. **goal development**

   Refining directions and translating them into statements describing the specific and measurable outcomes desired.

7. **plan of action**

   Building a map of the programs and activities which will help the church move in the desired directions, achieve its goals, and permit the organization to accomplish them.

8. **follow-through coordination and support**

   Helping to keep the plan of action on track.

9. **assessment**

   Providing for mid-course coordination and correction. "How is it going and what adjustments need to be made in the plan of action to better its chances for accomplishment?"

10. **evaluation**

    Looking back at what happened, identifying accomplishments, and discovering learnings from the experience that inform the way this local church will move into the future.

11. **celebration**

    Joyfully honoring the meanings of accomplishment and learning.

While these eleven components are seen most naturally as sequential steps in a process, there are some cautions to be noted.

First, each time persons gather to engage in church planning they will not engage in all eleven components. For example, a congregation will be involved in **action** on its plans several months before it engages in **assessment** (component 9) or **evaluation** (component 10).

Second, some of the components will be repeated many times. Our point of view is that every time church persons gather to engage in **planning**, it is advisable to have a time for **worship** and to provide some **community-building** activity. And a church does not have to wait until everything has been completed before it can **celebrate**!

Third, each component is not always clearly distinguishable from others. Thus, many **faith-perspective** activities (component 3) may also **build community** (component 2) and/or surface **data** (component 4) which can be incorporated into the **planning**.

Fourth, times for **worship** can be provided at many points along the way or **worship** can happen spontaneously. Thus, while **worship** might be the first activity of a group when it gathers, it could happen in the midst of one of the other components or at the end of a time together, regardless of where the group happened to be in the process.

Section B of *Church Planning* contains a variety of **designs** for each component. The message is that **planning** is a very flexible and creative endeavor. The **planning** leaders will select a **design** for use within each component. The decisions will be informed by such factors as amount of time available, the experience and/or expertise of the group, the needs of the present situation, etc.

It is quite true that if some of these steps were deleted **planning** still would be going on in the local church. But we strongly believe that **planning** will be richer and more effective if all the components are included. Here are some of our reasons written from the perspective of local church members.

worship. Our relationship with God is at the heart of all we do. **Planning** is a form of stewardship; it is a way of being more intentional in our use of all our resources. Through worship we celebrate our covenant with God and bring it to the forefront of our minds. Therefore, we include worship in every gathering and activity so that our **planning** can be done in the context of faith. Otherwise, it can seem an excessively secular, artificial activity for the church.

community building. Persons need to feel welcome and included in the group. None of us ever knows all there is to know about another—but we often think we do. Getting in touch with each other in new ways frees us from old stereotypes and enables us to hear contributions without prejudging. Tensions lessen and creativity increases. Part of **planning** is becoming aware of the gifts of persons within the church community which have not previously been fully realized. Frequently they surface during community building.

faith perspective. What does it mean to be a church? This church? How we understand our faith has great impact on what we believe our church should be and do. Along with worship, establishing a faith perspective helps to place the **planning** experience within a theological context. It reminds us of our reasons for church involvement, and strengthens our commitment to that involvement.

data gathering and interpretation. All of us carry around information which informs the decisions we make. The more careful and conscious we are about that information, the better use we will be able to make of it. Information comes from feelings, facts, statistics, past achievements and hopes for the future. Any or all of these sources can be used in **planning**.

direction selection. This component follows the data-gathering activities within our congregation and community which have resulted in possibility statements about the future of our church. The purpose of this component is to review, understand, and make decisions from these statements.

To work at all of them equally may involve working at too many things without enough energy and resources to fully accomplish any of them. So, to assure that some directions for the future get special attention, it is necessary to choose from the options. These priorities are selected in light of our perception of the present situation and need.

goal development. Directions point the way into our future. However, such statements are usually not specific enough to prescribe what actions need to be taken. It is necessary for us to explore a direction until it is possible to indicate desired outcomes which are measurable and achievable. Thus, goals are explicit refinements of the directions.

plan of action. In order to make progress in the directions chosen by our congregation and achieve the goals, helpful programs and activities need to be organized and implemented. This takes us into the very detailed questions of who will do what by when. The plan of action pictures the territory to be covered to get from where the church is now to where it wants to be at a specific point in the future.

follow-through coordination and support. Once the plan of action is set in motion, and we are actively carrying it out, a special group needs to keep in touch with everyone in order to coordinate activity and communication. This makes the most of available resources, avoids duplication of effort, and provides a supportive climate for those working hard to carry out our plan.

assessment. When setting up the original plan of action, we will not be able to take into account all possible complications down the road. Sometimes adjusting the plan is desirable. Assessment needs to be set up so that adjustments to the plan of action can be seen as mid-course corrections rather than failure. Prior to the end of the **planning** period some people and groups will have completed much or all of their work on a particular program or activity. Special times are set aside to identify learnings from and make affirmations about their work.

evaluation. At the outset, a church will have stipulated a set period of time in which its plan of action is implemented and completed. At the end of that period of time we look back to evaluate what happened. Some of the original plan really took off; some of the plan just did not happen. Why? These learnings can be helpful in future **planning**. Did having the church engage in this kind of **planning** really help? Have we learned something about **planning** which will be helpful in the future? Evaluation focuses on accomplishments and the reasons behind them as a way of informing future action.

celebration. We quite naturally look for ways to celebrate special moments of life. When a church has worked hard to set itself in important directions and has worked hard to achieve them over a period of time, there will be cause joyfully to lift up the experiences of that time. Those experiences have rich meaning for us — the fun we had; the mistakes we made; how we survived; how we thrived; the difference we feel. To honor these in joyful celebration affirms the nature of the community and gives energy for new efforts.

We believe this eleven-component approach advocates **planning** in a way that respects that it is a local church—not an individual and not a business—which is doing the **planning**. Obviously, each component can be done in numerous ways, so there are multiple options for each component in *Church Planning*. They take different amounts of time, and some are more elaborate than others. However you finally decide to put together a **design** for **planning,** we strongly recommend that each component be included in the overall **planning** experience of the local church.

how to organize and administer planning in the local church

When a local church decides to engage in **planning**, attention needs to be given to how it will go about it. In short, the **planning** effort itself needs to be planned! The following questions need to be addressed by a church at the beginning of its **planning**.

Who will organize and administer the **planning** process? *Church Planning* is written to be utilized by local churches without special training. It is assumed, however, that the congregation or official board has voted to engage in **planning**. Moreover, it is assumed that the official board has delegated the task of organizing and administering the **planning** process to an existing committee/board/task force, or to a specially created **planning** group. It will be this group who will make the decisions or recommendations about the other questions in this section.

The **planning group** may find it desirable to enlist the help of **planning facilitators**. These **facilitators** may be available through the association or conference.

For what period of time is the church planning? Will you be **planning** for a period of one year? More? Less? Typically, a church with little **planning** experience does best **planning** for one year or, at most, two years. Unless **planning** centers around major developmental work, such as relocation, program **planning** does well to respect a one-or two-year cycle.

It is important to have a specific period of time for which the **planning** is done. Some churches plan for a calendar year, from January through December. Others plan for a program year, such as September through June. As you make this decision remember that having definite time parameters will help to focus your **plan of action.**

Who will be involved in each of the eleven components? Will it be the entire congregation in each step? Only the formal leadership? A combination? A principle to be observed is that of ownership through involvement. The more the entire congregation or a major portion of it is involved, the greater the sense of responsibility for the **decisions** and the **plan of action**.

In most congregations, however, it is impractical for everyone to be involved in all eleven components. The **formal leadership** of the congregation is empowered to perform some of the **planning** functions. Thus, a reasonable plan might call for the congregation to participate through **direction selection** (component 5) after which **formal leadership** develops **goals** (component 6) and a **plan of action** (component 7). A variety of persons and groups are then recruited to implement the plan with the **planning group** and **formal leadership** responsible for **follow-through coordination and support** (component 8) and **assessment** (component 9). The congregation is then significantly involved again in the final **evaluation** (component 10) and **celebration** (component 11).

Whenever people are gathered to work on one or more of the components it will be helpful to them if they can get an overview of all eleven

components and know at what point they are presently at work.

When is the best time to do planning? There are some times of the year that just are not suitable for certain congregations to get maximum participation in the **planning** effort. In some parts of the country, for example, the pace of activity slows during the summer and many people are away on vacation. If **planning** is done in the spring, how is the **plan of action** sustained during a period of lessened activity in the summer? Planting or harvesting times in rural areas may keep key people away. How about your church? When is the best time to involve those persons who are needed?

How much time will be available to do the planning? The first thing to note is that it is necessary to work through components one through seven before a congregation is ready to begin implementing its **plan of action**. So, an adequate **planning period** is necessary to work through these components prior to the beginning of the **program period**.

Once you have identified who will be involved in the work on each component, you can then decide how much time can reasonably be expected from that group. A useful model has been a congregational gathering for a six- or seven-hour block of time during which components one through five are worked through. Following that, a similar block of time is scheduled for the **formal leadership** to gather and **develop goals** and the **plan of action**. There are many alternatives to this, however. For example, the **planning group** may spend a month or two in **data gathering**. This could involve both events with members of the congregation to surface their feelings and perceptions, and the collection of demographic statistics and other factual data.

You might consider a weekend retreat setting which would give you an extended time to work on several components. Or you might consider a series of two- or three-hour segments spread over a period of six or eight weeks.

Planning is hard work and is time-consuming. The more time and energy you are willing to invest the more satisfying your results will be. Don't handicap yourself by attempting short cuts! By reviewing the options within each component in *Section B* and what each is designed to accomplish, you will get a clearer picture of the time requirements.

Which options within the components will you use? Which options are used will depend a great deal on the experience, needs, and style of the church—and the experience, skills, and style of the planning leaders.

In some instances a church might well use more than one option within a component. For example, you might choose to use two or more **data-gathering** options. Or, in an instance where people may not know each other very well, it might be helpful to put extra emphasis on **community building**. Limiting the **directions** to two or three in a smaller church or expanding them to five or six in a large parish also are examples of how **designs** can be adapted to meet the needs of individual churches.

Where will the planning activities take place? Most of the time churches use their own facilities as the place for **planning**. That makes sense, as church facilities usually have the space for larger groups to meet and break up into small groups. For portions of the work, some churches find it useful to go to a retreat center that has facilities adequate to meet the needs of the **design**.

In any event, the key factor is to provide the kind of facilities needed to enhance the work of those who gather to plan. Is there space to have a large group? Are the chairs movable so different groupings are possible? Is there wall space for posting newsprint? Does the atmosphere contribute to a sense of hopefulness and possibility about the future?

What will be the pace of the design? If the **design** calls for a lengthy meeting or meetings there are certain dynamics which can help

people's attention span and bodily comfort. Creativity and enthusiasm will dissipate if people are required to sit in one place listening to others for extended periods of time.

The opportunity to participate will be increased if people have some period when they are working on a task with only one or two others. Movement between small groups of two or three, groups of four to eight, and the total group for various activities can be helpful. People often appreciate an occasional opportunity for time alone to think and reflect. Many of the **designs** in *Section B* call for individual work which can contribute to the variety of pace.

Some movement to different parts of a room or to different rooms can be helpful if it is not overdone and if directions are clear. It is not advisable to extend a session beyond an hour without at least a three- or four-minute "stand up and stretch" break. If the meetings are for a long period of time, energy will be increased if there are recreational moments—fun breaks, games, pantomimes, snacks, and so on. Activities such as writing, reading, role playing and singing stretch people's attention span and comfort. In other words, some variation in activities will help.

What materials will be needed? Depending on which options have been selected from within the components, certain materials will need to be available. The key is to work this through ahead of time.

Unless you are absolutely sure everyone will know everyone else, name tags can be of considerable assistance. In most of the **designs** there will be occasions for posting written material before groups. A chalkboard can be used for this purpose. However, unless someone is assigned the responsibility of keeping notes on everything placed on the chalkboard, this material can be quickly lost. Therefore, a better technique is to use newsprint and felt-tip marker. This increases your flexibility and provides a permanent record. Newsprint at least 24" by 36" should be used. Red or yellow markers will not be easily readable. Using different colors for different parts of the process helps you collate and keep track of the material later.

Some of the options in *Section B* call for the use of individual worksheets. These can be ordered in the necessary quantities on the order form at the end of this section. Or, permission is granted for copying or mimeographing these materials if you prefer. The more materials given to participants at one time, the less useful they will seem. Give materials out as they are needed with adequate explanation of why they are being used and how they are to be used.

building a design

Designing can be a creative and enjoyable activity for a **planning group** and/or **planning facilitators**.

By the time you get to the **designing** task you will have made some preliminary decisions about who will be involved in the work on each component and how much time will be available for doing this work.

The optional **designs** contained in *Section B* are quite detailed and provide specific instructions for leading them. Your tasks are to select from among the various options the activities which are most suitable for the members of the congregation, and to make sure that each activity begins where the previous one ended and builds on it.

Here are some principles to keep in mind in **designing**, and in leading a **design** you have created:

1. Participants need to know what is going to happen. At the beginning of each session give a brief orientation to the work to be done, what outcomes are hoped for, how the group will be working together, what the schedule is, etc.
2. Be clear about the purpose of each activity. Share the purpose with the group. Each of the components contained in this section has a brief purpose statement. Make sure the purpose is clear to you so that you can share it with others in your own words.
3. Make transitions smooth and clear. Within a **design** make sure everyone is aware when you move from one step to the next. From time to time review for everyone what has already happened and then preview what is yet to come. This is especially important when you move from one component to another. For example, when you have completed **data gathering and interpretation** (component 4) and are ready to begin work on **direction selection** (component 5) make sure that the transition is clear. Summarize what has been accomplished. Explain the purpose of the next component. Give people an opportunity to ask questions about what is happening. You might find it helpful to have the eleven components written out and posted on newsprint in the room and point it out when a transition is being made. When events are separated by days or weeks it is especially important for people to recall what has gone before and for new people to be brought "on board."
4. Review what is said about "pace" (pages 9-10). Plan variety of movement in your activities so that people are kept interested and refreshed. Be sensitive to people's need for breaks from sitting or intense activity.
5. Achieve "closure" at the conclusion of each meeting. The official ending of a meeting should be clear to all participants. This can be done in a variety of ways. The meeting can be **evaluated**. (Some **designs** for doing this are included in component 10.) Someone can summarize what has happened and what has been achieved, and preview next steps to be taken. The group can come together in a time of **worship**. Or a simple prayer and benediction may be offered. The point is that meetings should end clearly and not just fade away.

design checklist

Section B contains many options in each component area for you to consider. *Church Planning* provides a number of options, recognizing that no one way is useful to all. This means time will have to be spent reviewing all options presented, seeing which ones seem more useful.

Please keep the following in mind when choosing among the options as you build a **planning design** for your church.

1. There is a significant likelihood that you will have to adapt any of the options. You may feel an extra step needs to be incorporated or that a step needs to be modified or deleted. It is our hope you will do that, because your judgement is crucial in determining what is really going to work.

2. Because there are so very many ways to accomplish what each option is attempting, you may know of a way, not published in *Church Planning,* which can get done that which needs doing. When that is the case, it is our hope that you will substitute one with which you feel more comfortable.

3. You might find that you want to combine **designs**—you might see an idea in one **design** that you want to incorporate into another.

The following is a checklist for your use in **designing** a **planning** experience. A sample is shown on pages A-23 and A-24.

design checklist

A. 1. Who gives authority for a planning experience in this church?
   2. Have they decided to affirm the idea of planning?
   3. What can you do to help them understand and decide affirmatively?
   4. Will they support the planning experience?

What is the difference between questions 2 and 4? Do churches know what it means to "affirm"?

B. Who will participate in the planning experience and at what points? Who will secure their participation? How many sessions?

purpose of session(s)	**participants**	**who will secure participants?**
1.		
2.		
3.		
etc.		

C. Who will lead and help coordinate the planning experience?

D. Will you honor all component areas suggested by *Church Planning* as a part of the planning experience?

	yes/no
Worship	_____
Community Building	_____
Faith Perspective	_____
Data Gathering and Interpretation	_____
Direction Selection	_____
Goal Development	_____
Plan of Action	_____
Follow Through	_____
Assessment	_____
Evaluation	_____
Celebration	_____

E. Outline the planning experience. By using the outline which follows you can begin to wrestle with the decisions which need to be made in creating your design. Use a pencil as you will probably change your mind a number of times while organizing your thoughts and will need to erase early ideas.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.
session _____ date _____ place _____													
who is involved													
component area													
option being used													
time needed													
breaks													
who leads this part of the experience													
materials needed													
see note:													

	session _____ date _____ place _____	who is involved	component area	option being used	time needed	breaks	who leads this part of the experience	materials needed	see note:
14.									
15.									
16.									
17.									
18.									
19.									
20.									
21.									
22.									
23.									

notes (adaptations, etc.)

one-year planning process: an illustration

event	planning components	activity	minimum time required	participant
meeting of official board		official board evaluates the need for planning, is introduced to *Church Planning* and how it could be used in their church, and names a planning group	1 hour	official board, pastor
		intervening time: 1-3 months		
day one planning meeting	worship, community building, faith perspective, data gathering, direction selection	broad base of membership works through planning components 1-5 to develop and make decisions about future directions for the church	6½ hours	congregation, official board, formal leadership, planning group
		intervening time: 1 month		
day two planning meeting	worship, community building, goal development, plan of action	plan of action developed with tasks assigned, timeline clarified, and follow through coordination and support and assessment plans determined	8¾ hours	formal leadership, official board, planning group
		intervening time: 3 and 6 months		
follow through coordination and support meeting	follow through coordination and support	exchange information about work on programs/activities, provide support for persons working on the programs/ activities	1½ hours	planning group, persons with plan of action responsibility
		intervening time: 3 months		
assessment meeting	assessment	assess programs, make modifications in plans of action	3 hours	official board, planning group, persons with plan of action responsibility
		intervening time: 3-6 months		
evaluation meeting	evaluation	determine effectiveness of program, identify learnings, recommend future use of church planning	3 hours	official board, formal leadership, planning group, leaders and participants in programs/activities
		intervening time: I month		
celebration	celebration	congregation celebrates the achievements and learnings from the planning effort	1 hour	congregation

church planning in a small church

This is a ficticious account. It is an attempt to characterize how a church with a small number of members might use the resource. It is written as a first person narrative of the pastor of such a church. The hope is that it may stimulate adaptation of the resource.

I am the pastor of First United Church of Christ in a village of 2,000. We have just over one hundred-fifty members. It has been almost a year since I became pastor of this church. Our church is governed by a central committee made up of nine persons who also serve on committees dealing with education, finance and congregational care. There are two other churches in the village.

When I first looked at *Church Planning,* it seemed almost too ambitious for our church. After thinking it through, I felt there appeared to be some ways to adapt it. I brought together the chairperson of the council and three standing committees to talk it over.

We reviewed the basic idea of **planning.** We always had some sort of **planning** going on but had never tried to make a special effort of it other than the usual sort of thing such as planning for special programs every now and then. We had never, for instance, thought of trying to have the whole congregation involved. Frankly, it was the idea of getting more people to share their ideas about where we're heading that I found attractive. During the course of our conversation, I shared why that sort of thing was attractive to me, personally.

The chairpersons were not excited to get on with the idea, but they did agree to explore it further. We agreed to spend a full Sunday afternoon seeing what the possibilities might be.

At our afternoon meeting, we looked at each of the component sections and chose the procedures from each section that made the most sense to us.

There was general agreement that we would not be able to get more than one major block of time for members to discuss in which **directions** they wanted the church to go. Consequently, we set aside a Sunday afternoon and early evening, from 2:30 to 8:30 p.m. We also scheduled a time when each of the standing committees could meet to do **planning,** growing out of the **directions** set by the congregation. In short, we set up an overview of what could happen, and it made enough sense for us to plan to test our idea with the council and standing committees.

We invited them to an evening meeting and explained our idea. Not everyone was convinced that it would be that useful, but there was agreement that it could stimulate some renewed interest. Those of us who made the proposal were told to go ahead, and people agreed to cooperate in helping to enlist participation.

Looking back on it, the extra time getting people to react to our proposal was a risk, but well worth it. It gave us a chance to see how realistic our thoughts were. Also, it gave our church leaders a chance to hear me lift up a concern that our church have more of a sense of direction. I recognize that, in part, they were trying to support my leadership.

Our group of five, the chairpersons and myself, got down to business. Our intention was to have the first day of work with the congregation well planned. We decided that I would start it with a brief worship based on "Living Sacrifice," one of the suggested formats for a brief **worship** experience.

After someone else gave people an overview of how we were to spend the day, all of us led **community building**, entitled "Early Church Memories." That went well and was followed by "Biblical Images" for our **faith perspective** component. By the way, we changed the biblical passages from the ones suggested. That, in itself, grew out of an interesting conversation the five of us had when **planning.**

We used the "Dream Trip" procedure in the **data** section after a short snack break, and by this time people were not self-conscious about being in small groups. Newsprint started to paper the walls, and there was a real sense of spontaneity to it all. By the end of this time, we had isolated quite a few **directions** and, in spite of occasional confusion with meanings of words, were able to sense that there were some fairly exciting **directions.**

By the time we passed out the score sheet for "Weighing" to be used to decide which **directions** would be selected, there was a real sense of curiosity. People could hardly wait for the break to get over: that's when we tabulated the results.

The results were announced and we then evaluated our time together using the "Responses" format in the **evaluation** section. We ended up with **directions** and the joy of having the kind of conversations we had. People enjoyed talking about things like this. Needless to say, the **planning group** felt good.

About two weeks later, we had all of the formal leaders of the three standing committees come together. We also invited the officers of the Women's Fellowship. We used the "With Formal Leadership" procedures found in the **plan of action** section. It was more than interesting to see the groups work at **planning.** It was important. For the first time, I sensed that we were really moving together. During the **evaluation** period, a number of people said that "something like this should happen each year."

The council agreed that they would take the responsibility for **follow through** and **coordination**. They used the format described in "Liaison" in that section of the Manual. For the first time since I became pastor here, it seemed as though the council were really on top of things.

We discovered that a number of the plans which were originally set had to be changed. Using the "Adjustments" procedure in the **assessment** section was helpful in that regard. I took

leadership of that and really felt that I was being helpful to people who needed to have the chance to get out from under some plans that were not realistic.

We are about to have our year-end **evaluation.** The council wants the five of us who were behind getting this thing started to lead it. We are inviting all church leaders, the ones who were a part of the **planning** event to set **goals** and **plans of action**, to be a part of that **evaluation** meeting. It is our intention to use the "Recommmendation" procedure in the **evaluation** section of the Manual.

If all goes well, the council is taking the responsibility of planning for the **celebration** and they have seen the ideas in that section of *Church Planning.*

Looking at it all, it was worth it. It wasn't always smooth sailing. We have learned a good deal. I am confident that we will continue to have a **planning** format in our future. Right now, I would like to use some of the other procedures suggested in the Manual. It seems that some of the alternatives, other than "Dream Trip" would be particularly interesting. That decision, though, I hope will be made by a group of people appointed by the council to lead the next **planning** year's approach.

small church design checklist

This is a completion of the design checklist found on pages A-13 and A-14 which has been developed from the perspective of a small church.

This section contains many options in each component area for you to consider. *Church Planning* provides a number of options, recognizing that no one way is useful to all. This means time will have to be spent reviewing all options presented, seeing which ones seem more useful.

Please keep the following in mind when choosing among the options as you build a **planning design** for your church.

1. There is a significant likelihood that you will have to adapt any of the options. You may feel an extra step needs to be incorporated or that a step needs to be modified or deleted. It is our hope you will do that, because your judgement is crucial in determining what is really going to work.
2. Because there are so very many ways to accomplish what each option is attempting, you may know of a way, not published in *Church Planning*, which can get done that which needs doing. When that is the case, it is our hope that you will substitute one with which you feel more comfortable.
3. You might find that you want to combine **designs**—you might see an idea in one **design** that you want to incorporate into another.

The following is a checklist for your use in **designing** a **planning** experience.

design checklist

A. 1. Who gives authority for a planning experience in this church?
2. Have they decided to affirm the idea of planning?
3. What can you do to help them understand and decide affirmatively?
4. Will they support the planning experience?

What is the difference between questions 2 and 4? Do churches know what it means to "affirm"? The Church Council is made up of the Trustees (4), Diaconate (4), Christian Education (3), Outreach (3), the President of the Church, who chairs the Council, Presidents of the 3 Fellowships, the Pastor, Treasurer and Secretary. It makes basic decisions for the Church. We have 126 members.

As Pastor I shared my hopes for planning at an informal meeting of all the Presidents on the Council. They were supportive and suggested that the Council make the final decision. The Council affirmed the following:

① A Planning Committee of the Pastor, the President of the Council and the President of the Diaconate would develop and lead the planning program.

② The Church would spend 3 months getting ready, would plan for a 15-month period, would then evaluate the planning experience and, if positive, spend an additional 3 months getting ready for a new planning period.

B. Who will participate in the planning experience and at what points? Who will secure their participation? How many sessions?

Our planning committee desires to have the full congregation participate in the planning and will spend a Sunday mid-afternoon to mid-evening together. The Church Council will contact members of the congregation and invite their participation. All council members will participate. The Council, with the help and guidance of the Planning Committee will be responsible for coordination, follow through, support, assessment, and evaluation and will lead the final celebration.

There are two sessions for the congregation: the Planning Sunday at the very beginning and the final celebration.

The Council will give time to each and every step of the entire planning experience.

The Planning Committee will meet twice prior to the Planning day and at least once a month, prior to Council meetings or as needed, to provide ongoing leadership.

C. Who will lead and help coordinate the planning experience?

The Planning Committee and the Council

D. Will you honor all component areas suggested by *Church Planning* as a part of the planning experience?

	yes/no
Worship	y
Community Building	y
Faith Perspective	y
Data Gathering and Interpretation	y
Direction Selection	y
Goal Development	y
Plan of Action	y
Follow Through	y
Assessment	y
Evaluation	y
Celebration	y

E. Outline the planning experience. By using the outline which follows you can begin to wrestle with the decisions which need to be made in creating your design. Use a pencil as you will probably change your mind a number of times while organizing your thoughts and will need to erase early ideas.

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what is in this section

This section contains optional designs for engaging a group of people in the eleven different components which together make up the planning process for a congregation or church group. The designs are preceded by instructions on how to put the various options together. Illustrations are provided.

how to use this section

This section contains instructions for the majority of activities required for local church planning. The planning leaders will familiarize themselves with each of the designs and then decide which options to use in the planning process.

All the designs have instructions for "a leader." One person or several might be responsible for leading the steps. In some cases this will be one of the planning facilitators; in others, a member of the planning group.

The designs are provided in great detail with specific times assigned to each step. Remember, however, that you control the design rather than the design controlling you. Be creative and flexible. If you want to add a step, eliminate a step, adapt, etc., do so. If you find that the time allotments need to be altered, do so. It should be noted, however, that the time suggestions in most cases are minimum times. Be careful not to get so behind schedule that you are unable to complete the necessary work when a group gathers.

Each design notes the materials needed. Be sure these are prepared or secured prior to the meeting.

glossary

planning. Projecting and developing a course of action for accomplishing desired outcomes. Planning is deciding what kind of future is wanted, and then establishing the means to get there.

planning facilitators. Persons who are skilled and trained to assist local churches with the task of organizing and administering congregational planning.

official board. The group within the local church which constitutionally is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the congregation. It is variously called council, consistory, board of deacons, cabinet, etc.

planning group. A task force of the congregation which has responsibility for organizing and facilitating congregational planning. When **planning facilitators** are used, this is the group which coordinates their work.

congregational units. All the organized committees, boards, organizations and task forces of the congregation. They include but are not limited to such groups as the committee on Christian education, stewardship committee, evangelism committee, women's fellowship, men's fellowship, youth fellowship, elders, trustees, etc.

formal leadership. The leaders of the **congregational units** — officers of all the organizations within the congregation and, in some cases, all members of certain boards and task forces.

directions. The major areas in which a congregation intends to work.

goals. Statements describing the specific and measurable outcomes desired related to the **directions** in which the congregation has decided to go.

plan of action. A set of specific steps or activities to be taken in order to achieve the **goals**.

design. An arrangement of elements which structures the use of time in a group. A series of steps are put together so that an activity is created which has a specific beginning and ending and is intended to accomplish a purpose. When several of these structured activity **designs** are put together with breaks, meals, transitions, and other group activities, a meeting **design** is created. When you are engaged in this task you are designing.

planning period. A specific period of time devoted to planning which results in a congregational **plan of action**.

program period. A specific period of time devoted to the implementation of a congregational **plan of action**.

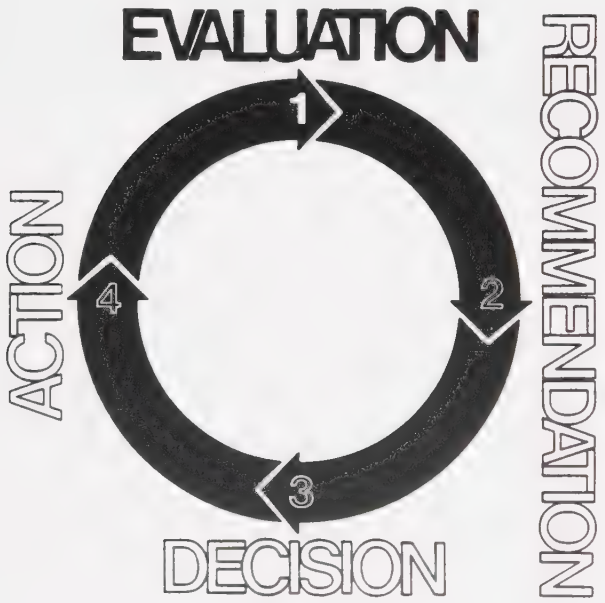
Involving those engaged in planning in acknowledging their relationship with God.

Our relationship with God is at the heart of all we do. Planning is a form of stewardship; it is a way of being more intentional in our use of all our resources. Through worship we celebrate our convenant with God and bring it to the forefront of our minds. Therefore, we include worship in every gathering and activity so that our planning can be done in the context of faith. Otherwise, it can seem an excessively secular, artificial activity for the church.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, worship can be understood as being included in the initial stage — **evaluation**. When the church worships it is gaining perspective on and reinforcement of its relationship with God. It is getting in touch with its roots and its identity. Its future is shaped by the proclamation of the Gospel. Knowing who one is and what one is called to be and do is always a vital part of worship — and is included in what is meant by evaluation in the power cycle.



A Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders, as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are five **designs** in this section which require from 10 to 40 minutes to complete.

2. While each **design** is a complete experience, leaders are encouraged to adapt or add to the **designs** in order to "tailor make" them for the size or unique characteristics of their group.

3. The size of the group always is a factor to be considered in **designing.** A relatively small group (up to 25) can be gathered in a variety of informal settings with opportunity for individual participation and sharing during the **worship.** For larger groups it may be necessary to adapt this style somewhat.

WORSHIP

design 1

living sacrifice

Setting: This **worship design** may be used at the beginning or end of a **planning** meeting. The total group is brought together and all stand near one another. If the group is not too large all can stand in a circle.

Materials Needed: Bible for leader
Hymnals or song sheets

Time: 10 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader invites persons to worship by reading Romans 12:1-2 and leads the group in singing a song/hymn which has the church as its theme.
2.	4	A leader reads Romans 12:4-12 in brief phrases, asking the entire group to repeat each phrase after it has been spoken. Some phrases may be repeated a number of times for emphasis, and some phrases may be repeated with emphasis on different words. This passage should be read with great dynamism and feeling.
3.	3	The group is led to participate in sentence prayers for (1) the church, (2) its leaders, and (3) the time spent together this day.

salt

Setting: This **worship design** may be used at the beginning or end of a **planning** meeting. The total group is brought together and all stand near one another. If the group is not too large all can stand in a circle.

Materials Needed: Bible for leader

Time: 10 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	1	A leader reads Matthew 5:13 and mentions a single characteristic of salt.
2.	2	The group is asked to call out additional characteristics.
3.	3	The group is asked to think about how those characteristics are reflected in the life of its church.
4.	3	A leader re-reads Matthew 5:13 and asks the group to offer sentence prayers in behalf of the church.
5.	1	Closing prayer by a leader.

WORSHIP

design 3

they'll know

Setting: This **worship design** may be used at the beginning or end of a **planning** meeting, or at a transition point from one activity to another. The total group is brought together and all stand near one another.

Materials Needed: Bible for leader
Hymnals or song sheets

Time: 10 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	1	A leader calls the group together and reads John 13:31-35.
2.	3	An appropriate song/hymn (perhaps "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love") is sung.
3.	4	Verse 35 is re-read with emphasis and persons are asked to respond to the question, "What would or could be the evidence others could see among us of our love and thereby our discipleship?"
4.	1	Request the group to sing again one of the verses of the song/hymn sung earlier.
5.	1	Prayer by a leader.

WORSHIP

design 4

praising

Setting: This **worship design** may be used at the beginning or end of a **planning** meeting, or at a transition point from one activity to another. The total group is brought together and all stand near one another.

Materials Needed: Bible for leader
Hymnals or song sheets

Time: 15 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	1	A leader calls the people together and shares the last verse of Psalm 150 as a call to worship .
2.	4	The group sings a song or hymn which has the praise of God as its theme.
3.	1	A leader reads Psalm 150.
4.	7	A leader then gives the group the following instructions: "I will read this psalm again and this time give us an opportunity to add to it out of our own experience with God. This psalm praises God in places and for actions. It goes on to suggest that we praise God with what is available to us; for example, with trumpet and dance and cymbals. When I read the psalm this time I will ask you to call out other places, actions, and ways that are part of our praise to God." Read: "Praise the Lord! Praise God in the sanctuary; praise God in the mighty firmament! Praise God in . . ." (Invite persons to call out ways to complete the sentence.) Read: "Praise God for mighty deeds; praise God according to God's exceeding greatness! Praise God for . . ." (Invite persons to call out ways to complete this sentence.)

Read: "Praise God with trumpet sound; praise God with lute and harp! Praise God with timbrel and dance; praise God with strings and pipe! Praise God with sounding cymbals; praise God with loud clashing cymbals! Praise God with . . ." (Invite persons to call out other ways to praise God.)

Read: "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

5. 2 The group sings again a portion of the song/hymn of praise.

Adaptation: In step 3 a second leader records on three sheets of newsprint (headed "Places," "Actions," "Ways") the biblical words of praise as the first leader reads the psalm. In step 4 the responses of the group are recorded on the newsprint sheets.

WORSHIP design 5

in silence

Setting: This **worship design** may be used at the beginning or end of a **planning** meeting, or at a transition point from one activity to another.

Materials Needed: Bible for each person
The Prayer Guide in the box on the next page for each person. These may be duplicated so that everyone has a sheet. Or, the guide may be put on newsprint or chalkboard and persons asked to copy it for their use.
Hymnals or song sheets.

Time: 40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	4	A leader calls the group to worship, explains how the **worship** will be done, introduces the Prayer Guide, and assigns the Scripture passage(s) to be read.*
2.	1	Persons are instructed to take their Prayer Guide and Bible and find a quiet place alone.
3.	25	Persons individually follow the Prayer Guide on next page.
4.	10	The total group is reconvened. Persons are given an opportunity to share anything they would like from the prayer and reflection period. Then a period of silence is provided and persons are invited to offer sentence prayers for the church. The **worship** concludes with the singing of a hymn.

* Note to Leader: For the Scripture reading assignment you could select from the following options:
— Each person selects what to read.
— Provide everyone with the same passage to read.
— Provide a list of passages from which persons can choose what to read.

PRAYER GUIDE

Preparation for Prayer

a. Find a quiet place where you can be alone.
b. Read the Scripture slowly, reflecting on any insights you receive.
c. Make a physical gesture which signals that prayer has begun (such as kneeling, bowing head, closing eyes, folding hands, etc.).

Prayer

In silence, pray about those matters most insistent in your thoughts. Allow time for God to reach you at the center of your being.

Reflection (It may help to write down some of your reflections.)

a. Reflect upon your thoughts, feelings, and mood during prayer.
b. What gift did you receive from God during prayer?
c. What thoughts do you want to keep with you?
d. How will this time of prayer and reflection influence you in your life in the church?

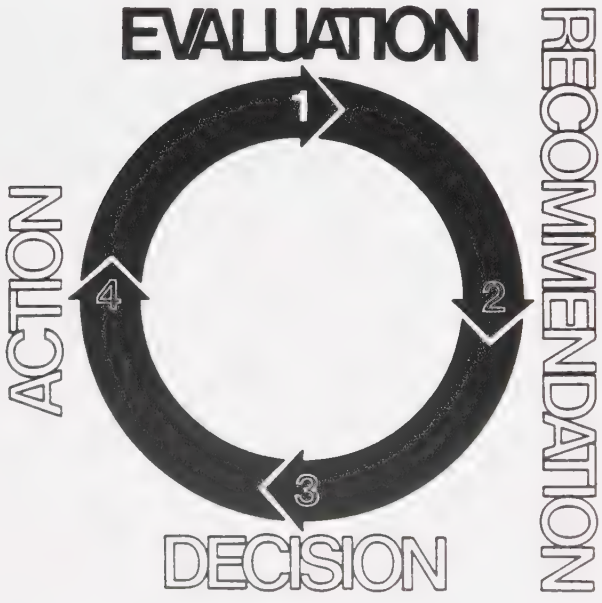
Getting people sufficiently comfortable with one another so they can enter into significant dialogue during the planning effort.

Persons need to feel welcome and included in the group. None of us ever knows all there is to know about another — but we often think we do. Getting in touch with each other in new ways frees us from old stereotypes and enables us to hear contributions without prejudging. Tensions lessen and creativity increases. Part of planning is becoming aware of the gifts of persons within the church community which have not previously been fully realized. Frequently they surface during community building.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, community building can be understood as being included in step one — **evaluation.** When persons in the church are relating to one another, getting to know one another, sharing one another's joys and sorrows, the issues of that faith community's identity and purpose are being addressed. Hopes and expectations for the church begin to emerge.



This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders, as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. The five **designs** in this section take from 25 to 40 minutes to complete.

2. The size of the group always is a factor to consider in **designing**. Some churches may have only 8-10 persons who will be the core group involved in most or all the steps in the **planning**. While **community building** activities should be provided for this group, it will require less time than with a larger group.

3. The **designs** call for small groups of 5-8 persons each. There are several factors to consider in deciding who should be in which small group. Will you want people who already know one another well, or do you see this as an opportunity for persons who don't know one another very well to be together? What kind of balance do you want in each small group — different ages? male and female? older members and newer members? Will you want members of the same family in different groups?

4. There are several techniques which can be used to form the small groups:
   a. If you know who will be present you can pre-assign persons to small groups to insure the desired make-up and balance. You can indicate the small group assignment on the name tag.
   b. You can allow people to form groups with persons they want to be with, or groups based on guidelines you provide, e.g., "persons you don't know well" or "persons you'd like to get to know better."
   c. A good technique is first to have persons find just one other person and have them say "hello" and share something which has been happening in their lives recently. Then, each pair finds another pair and introduces one another. This is done once more, each group of four joining another group of four and introducing one another. Groups of eight are formed and you are ready to proceed with the **design.**
   d. A fourth technique is "numbering off." If you have forty people present and you decide to have five groups of eight persons each, you have the group number off from one to five. All of the "ones" will be together in a group, all of the "twos" together, etc.

COMMUNITY BUILDING design 1

with the senses

Purpose: To increase participants' comfort in sharing personal experiences and to help them become familiar with one another's church background.

Setting: Participants are divided into small groups of 5-8 persons. (If there is a possibility persons within a small group do not know one another, time should be provided for introductions before the activity begins.)

Materials Needed: None

Time: 25-30 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces the idea that all of us remember pleasant experiences from our childhood associated with our senses (touch, taste, seeing, hearing) and gives an example . . . "I remember the feel of my grandfather's beard." "Please think of an early memory of your church experience associated with one of your senses." Give persons some time to think of one.
2.	15-20	People share in their small groups, noting where and when the event they are recalling occurred. After each person has had a chance to share and if there is extra time, encourage the groups to share additional experiences.
3.	2	In the total group, have people call out the sense memories of the past.
4.	5	A leader reminds the group that the activities of this day will shape the future of the church and will need the full participation, energy, wisdom, and senses of the group. Ask persons to reflect silently on how they can use all their senses in this meeting and to offer a silent prayer of commitment.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

design 2

early church memories

Purpose: To increase participants' comfort in sharing personal experiences and to help them become familiar with one another's church background.

Setting: Participants are divided into small groups of 5-8 persons. (If there is a possibility persons within a small group do not know one another, time should be provided for introductions before the activity begins.)

Materials Needed: None

Time: 25-30 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader asks each person to search his/her memory to discover a church-related experience which, in all likelihood, is unique to that person in the small group.
2.	2	Give people time to search their memories.
3.	20-25	Request that all persons be given a chance to share their unique church-related experiences in the small group. If there is time left over, encourage additional unique experience sharing within the small group.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

design 3

pictures on exhibition

Purpose: To help persons know one another better and become more comfortable with sharing information about themselves and their viewpoints.

Setting: This activity is done in the total group followed by a brief time in small groups.

Materials Needed: One sheet 8½x11 paper for each person
Colored markers or crayons for each person
Masking tape or pins

Time: 35 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader welcomes everyone and explains the purpose of the activity. Everyone is given a blank sheet of paper and colored markers or crayons. All persons are asked to draw a picture or to illustrate their church in some way. The picture is to be a symbol representing how they see their church, how they feel about it, or what it means to them.
2.	7	When persons have completed their pictures, they are instructed to attach them to their shirts or blouses with a pin or masking tape, and mill around looking at one another's drawings. It is best to have them mill for a few minutes in silence and then let them discuss the meaning of their drawings with one another.
3.	3	Persons are then invited to form small groups of 3-4 persons.
4.	10	Persons in each small group share with one another their response to the question: "What has been your most significant involvement in a church?" Each person then shares why he/she came to this meeting and what he/she hopes will be its outcome.
5.	5	The total group is reconvened and the leader invites persons to call out some of the expectations for the meeting which were shared in the small groups. The leader responds to these in terms of whether they are likely to be met or not.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

remembering/sharing

Purpose: To help persons know one another better and become more comfortable with sharing information about themselves and their viewpoints.

Setting: This activity is done in small groups.

Materials Needed: None

Time: 40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	5	A leader welcomes everyone and explains the purpose of the activity.
2.	5	Each person is asked to find another person and to spend a few minutes sharing responses to the question: "What is your earliest memory of this church?"
3.	10	Each pair finds another pair and introduces one another. Then each person shares his/her response to the question: "What has been the most significant thing our church has ever done?"
4.	15	Each group of four finds another group of four and introduces one another. Then each person shares his/her response to the question: "What is the most important part of the worship service for you?"
5.	5	Each person shares how he/she feels about being at this meeting and what hopes he/she has for it.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

twelve years old

Purpose: To increase participants' comfort in sharing personal experiences and to help them become familiar with one another's valuing of church life.

Setting: Participants are divided into small groups of 5-8 persons. (If there is a possibility persons within a small group do not know one another, time should be provided for introductions before the activity begins.)

Materials Needed: None

Time: 35-40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2-4	A leader introduces the idea that all of us can search our memories to remember being twelve years old. "Where did you live? What was life like when you were twelve years old?" People are requested to share.
2.	15	People share some of their memories in the small groups.
3.	2-4	A leader asks people to reflect on "How did you feel about the church when you were twelve years old and how is that the same or different from the way you feel about it today?"
4.	15	Persons share their perceptions in their small groups.
5.	1-2	A leader thanks everyone for sharing and indicates that the time ahead will be creating memories for the future.

Exploring what it means to be a church.

What does it mean to be a church? This church? How we understand our faith has great impact on what we believe our church should be and do. Along with worship, establishing a faith perspective helps to place the planning experience within a theological context. It reminds us of our reasons for church involvement, and strengthens our commitment to that involvement.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

Additional faith perspective activities can be found in the Faith Exploration Resources of the United Church of Christ. Catalog of Resources from the Office for Church Life and Leadership containing a list of these resources is available from Church Leadership Resources, 1400 North Seventh Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63106.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, faith perspective can be understood as being included in step one — **evaluation**. When engaged in this component the church is directly evaluating its meaning, calling, and faithfulness as a church. An awareness of its identity as "the people of God" and "the Body of Christ" helps a church envision what it wants to be and to do, and identify what it is hearing God call it to be and to do, both in the present moment and in the future.

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are six **designs** in this section, taking from 1 hour to 1 hour 50 minutes to complete.

2. The size of the group always is a factor to consider in **designing**. Some churches may have only 8-10 persons who will be involved in this component. The **designs** indicate when it is appropriate to use smaller groups if the total group numbers more than 10-12 persons. The size of the group may require making adjustments in the indicated time. Generally speaking, the more persons, the greater the time needed to complete each step.

3. It should be noted that Design Two and Design Three both deal with biblical images of the Church. Design Two asks the group to recall biblical images from memory. Design Three provides biblical passages from which the group is to discover the images.

4. A group which used Design Three responded that the biblical passages provided in that activity seem to be heavily oriented toward images which focus on the Church's inner life to the exclusion of its mission or outreach responsibility. If you choose this **design** you may want to be sensitive to this issue, and help the group explore the mission aspect of each image.

5. In engaging in **faith perspective** activities, it is possible to devote primary attention to the experience and faith of individuals. While this is an important aspect of these activities, the leader should help the group remember the corporate nature of the Church. The biblical images of the Church are community images rather than individual images.

6. Copies of My Pilgrimage in Church Life Worksheet (B-3:5) used in Design One, and Something Jesus Said in Nazareth Worksheet (B-3:15) in Design Five are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B* for ordering information.

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 1

pilgrimage

Purpose: To help persons recall and reflect on their lifelong experience with the church and to identify the values they hold related to their church life.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. The activity begins in the total group and then moves to the small groups.

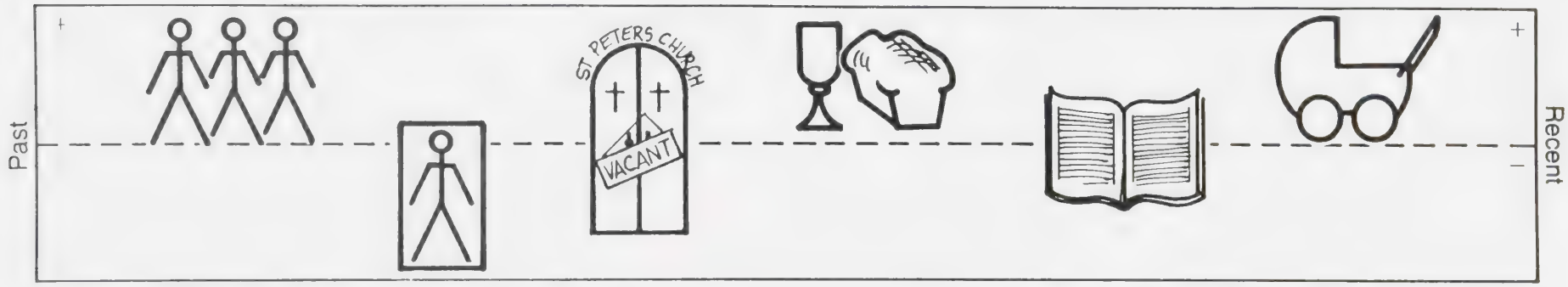
Materials Needed: My Pilgrimage in Church Life Worksheet (B-3:5) for each person

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes to 1 hour 25 minutes

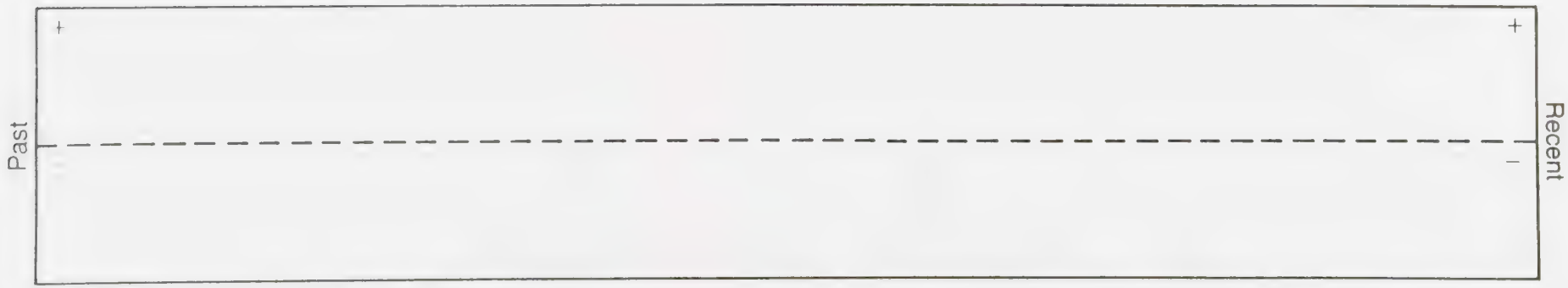
STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	5	Pass out pilgrimage worksheets and point out how individuals can "chart" ups and downs in their experiences in church life. A leader may illustrate this by drawing his/her own pilgrimage on newsprint. This pilgrimage is to include experiences in this church, but also in all other churches of which they have been a part.
3.	10	Individuals work alone to complete pilgrimage worksheets.
4.	10	Each person is asked to study and interpret his/her worksheet on the basis of what it appears he/she values in church life. The values interpreted from the chart may be written on the worksheet. A leader demonstrates by interpreting his/her newsprinted pilgrimage. Note: The "down" experience can indicate that the opposite experience is valued. For example, someone who indicates "loneliness" on the chart might be valuing relationships or feeling a part of a group. It would be helpful if the leader would model that kind of possibility in the chart's interpretation.
5.	25-35	Participants return to their small groups. Each person is given a few minutes to share his/her chart and its interpretation.

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
6.	10	Small groups briefly reflect on the question: "How would you summarize what your group values in church life?" Are these values met in present church experiences?"
7.	10	In the total group the small groups briefly share a summary of their last discussion. A leader may close with a comment such as: "What people value about church life tends to be what they are really willing to work to achieve. In our later work we will want to recall these values that we have talked about, in **planning** major **directions** for the church in the coming year.
8.	3	A leader summarizes the activity, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

my pilgrimage in church life worksheet



The symbols above illustrate some experiences one person has had during his/her pilgrimage in the church. Those on the left are part of the distant past, while those on the right are more recent. Those above the dotted line are viewed positively, while those below are viewed negatively. Take ten minutes and make pictures, symbols, words, or a graph line of your pilgrimage in church life.



Review your pilgrimage and see if you think it suggests that you value certain things in church life. What are they? Write them down somewhere on this sheet. Then take time in your small group to share with each other your pilgrimage and some of the values you hold in church life. Keep in mind how much time you have for your small group to share pilgrimages so that all have an opportunity to share.

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 2

church images

Purpose: To help persons compare and contrast their current local church life with some biblical images of the Church.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place. If the total group is less than 15 persons the activity will be done as one group. If there are more than 15 persons, steps 7 and 8 are to be done in small groups.

Materials Needed: Pencil and 3x5 card for each person
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	3	A leader explains that an image is a representation or a description and provides several examples of images of the Church. I feel the Church is like . . . the sun after a storm a family during a holiday a subway stop Congress a filling station
3.	4	Individuals are given 3x5 cards and asked to respond by writing completions to the statement: "I feel my church is like . . ."
4.	3	Individuals are asked to respond by writing completions to the statement: "I would like my church to be like . . ."

5.	10	A leader has two sheets of newsprint headed "is" and "would like." The leader invites persons to call out their responses written on their cards and records them on the newsprint.
6.	10	The group reflects on the two lists and attempts to identify the major areas in which there are differences between what is and what is desired.
7.	10	A leader asks the group to call out images of the Church which can be found in the Bible and records these on newsprint. The leader provides a few examples from the following:

Biblical images of the Church

Household of faith	Salt of the earth
Body of Christ	Teacher
Sheep	Preacher
Light of the world	Baptizer
Chosen people	Healer

8.	10	A leader invites the group to compare and contrast the biblical images with the images of their church which they developed earlier.
9.	10	If steps 7 and 8 were done in small groups, the total group is reconvened and each group reports on its discussion.
10.	3	A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 3

biblical images

Purpose: To enable members to reflect on some of the biblical understandings of the Church, and to compare and contrast those understandings with their own church.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. This activity begins in the total group, moves to small groups, and concludes in the total group.

Materials Needed: Bible passages or Bibles for each participant
Newsprint and markers for each small group

Time: 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	10	The small groups gather. A leader passes out the following passages. Each person in the small group receives a different passage.

Bible passages:

Romans 9:25-26	Ephesians 2:13-22
Romans 12:1-8	James 1:18
II Corinthians 3:2-3	I Peter 2:4-10
II Corinthians 5:17	John 13:5

Other passages can be chosen by the designer. They should stimulate thinking about images of the Church.

Adaptation: When less time is available all persons in a small group can be given the same passage, with each small group receiving a different passage.

Everyone is asked to read the passage assigned and determine what "image of the Church" is found in that passage which attempts to describe a characteristic of the Church.

		An image is a representation or description. It is the word or phrase in the passage which completes the sentence: "The Church is . . ." or "The Church is like . . ." In some passages more than one image can be found.
3.	15	Each person shares the New Testament image he/she found. When all have shared, compare the images. Does this church tend to reflect these images? All of them? Some of them? None of them?
4.	10-15	The small groups are asked to develop an ideal image for their church in terms or symbols more closely associated with the 20th century. (Example: Our church is like a storage battery, because we have a lot of energy stored up ready to put into action whenever there is a need.)
5.	10-15	In the total group the small groups share the New Testament images they found in the Bible passages and how their church reflects those images.
6.	10	Each small group is then asked to share its newly developed contemporary image and to interpret it.
7.	3	A leader summarizes the activity, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 4

focusing values

Purpose: To enable members to reflect on some of their values and their church's values, and to compare these with some biblical understandings.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. The activity begins in the total group, moves to small groups, and concludes in the total group.

Materials Needed: Paper and pencil for each participant
Pre-printed saying for each group
Bibles
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	10	Leader passes out pre-printed sayings (see box below) to small groups. Each group receives a different saying. Each person writes down his/her response to the following questions: a. Who values this saying today in our world? b. Does your family or cultural tradition value this saying? c. Does your life support or challenge this value?
3.	15	Each person shares his/her notes with the small group.
4.	15	On newsprint each small group records its responses to the question: How does our church support or challenge this value?
5.	20	Each small group is given the pre-selected Bible passage (see box below) for study and discussion. Each small group records on newsprint its responses to the question: How does this biblical passage support or challenge the saying?

6.	15	The total group is reconvened and each small group reports its discussion using its newsprint.
7.	3	A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

Saying	Bible Passage
1. It's more important to be human than to be important.	Philippians 2:5-11
2. It's more blessed to give than to receive.	Mark 14:3-9
3. God first, others next, me last.	Mark 12:28-34
4. Bigger is better.	Micah 6:6-8

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 5

something jesus said in nazareth

Purpose: To reflect on Luke 4:16-20.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. The activity begins in the total group and moves into small groups.

Materials Needed: Newsprint and markers
Bible study worksheet for each person

Time: 1 hour

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces the study and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	6	Bible study worksheets are passed out and the following instructions given: a. Note that there are four concerns indicated on the worksheets: the poor, the blind, the captive and the oppressed. Each small group will be assigned one of these concerns. Make the assignments. b. Each group, given the assigned concern, is to respond to sections 1, 2, 3 and 4. A group reporter is to be chosen to record responses in the small group on newsprint and later to report these to the total group. c. A leader encourages the group to be conversational and to appreciate the different thoughts that individuals will have in interpretation. d. A leader indicates the amount of time allowed for the discussion and asks people to start the small group discussion.
3.	30	Small groups complete the worksheet.
4.	5	Break

5.	10	The total group reconvenes. A leader solicits responses to the first questions from each group's reporter, then moves to the second, third and fourth questions.
6.	Optional Step	Participants may wish to focus the insights of their discussion into possibility statements, using this Bible study as a form of **data gathering.** If so, use Design Six (B-4:17) of *Church Planning.*
7.	1	Close with a brief prayer.

something jesus said in nazareth worksheet

And Jesus "came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me to
> preach good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim release
> to the captives
> and recovering of sight to the blind,
> to set at liberty those who are
> oppressed,
> to proclaim the acceptable year of
> the Lord.

"And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him."

Luke 4:16-20
Revised Standard Version

	OUR CHURCH	OUR COMMUNITY	IN THE WORLD
1. Who are the poor? captive? blind? oppressed?			
2. What would good news be to these poor? captive? blind? oppressed?			
3. How is our church preaching good news to these poor? captive? blind? oppressed?			
4. What does it mean to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord?			

FAITH PERSPECTIVE

design 6

our church's mission

Purpose: To help members reflect on the purpose of their church.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. It assumes that the church has a statement of purpose, mission statement, or church covenant.

Materials Needed: A copy of the church's statement of purpose, mission statement, or covenant for each participant or displayed on newsprint
Newsprint and markers

Time : 1 hour 50 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	5	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	15	A leader reads II Corinthians 3:2-3 and calls attention to the image of the Church as "a letter from Christ." Each person is asked to reflect on the question, "What message is our church communicating to the world about Christ?" and to share his or her response with the others in the small group.
3.	30	A copy of the church's present statement of purpose, mission statement, or covenant is given to each person (or the statement is displayed on a large sheet of newsprint). Each small group is assigned one or more of the following questions. Each group is instructed to review and critique the statement of purpose from the perspective of the question(s) assigned it and to propose changes in the statement which will improve the statement. a. Do we really believe this statement? Is this a statement that most of our members could support and to which they could be committed?

b. Is this statement still relevant to our present situation? Has the nature of our church or our community changed in any way since this statement was written which makes it less compelling?

c. Does the statement reflect a good balance between maintaining and enriching the life of our church, and reaching out in mission to our community and world?

d. Is the statement faithful to our biblical understanding of the Church?

e. Is the statement inclusive of the commitments and points of view of different groups of people within the church (e.g., adults, older adults, children, youth, minorities, singles, long-time members, newer members)?

f. In what way is the statement unique to our church? Could the same statement have been written by almost any church?

g. Would the statement clearly represent the church's stance to a visitor or prospective member?

4.	10	Break
5.	15	The total group reconvenes and each small group reports on its proposed changes.
6.	30	After each group has reported, the total group discusses the question, "In light of our discussion to this point, what can we say about the purpose of our church?"
7.	5	A leader summarizes this session, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

Note: This session can be immediately followed with **Data Gathering and Interpretation**, Design Six (B-4:17).

Surfacing and interpreting information which can inform and influence the choices to be made about the future.

All of us carry around information which informs the decisions we make. The more careful and conscious we are about that information, the better use we will be able to make of it. Information comes from feeling, facts, statistics, past achievements and hopes for the future. Any or all of these sources can be used in planning.

The purpose of this component is to help planners become aware of information about the church, its members, and its community. Data can come from many different sources and can be of very different nature and quality. For example, the feelings persons have about their past experiences as members of the church are data. So are the hopes and dreams they have about their church. This data is very subjective and differs from person to person. It is soft data. Statistical information about membership and financial trends in the congregation is data. So is census information about the community in which the church is located. This data is objective and hard data.

It is possible to be very simple or very elaborate in data gathering. Months can be spent in collecting and analyzing data or it all can be done in one meeting of the congregation. Probably activity somewhere between these extremes will be most satisfactory.

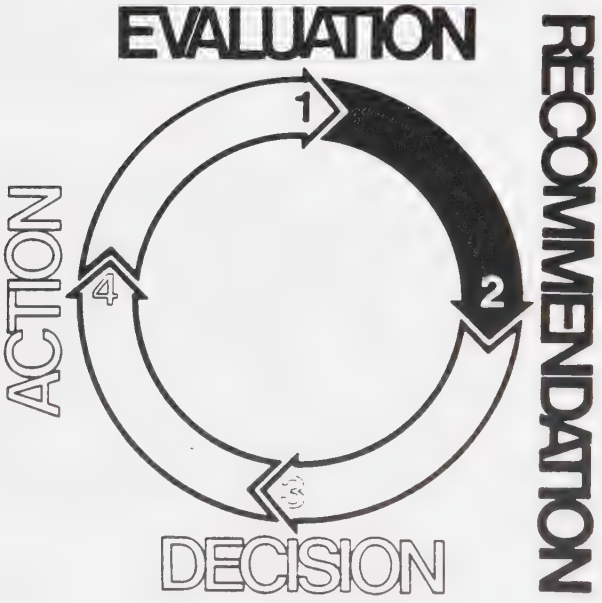
In order to complete this phase of the planning with information which can be handled in the next phase (direction selection), it will be necessary to interpret the data and develop possibility statements based on it. Each of the following designs provides for this. If other data gathering processes are used, it will be necessary to find ways to translate the data into possibility statements.

Ways should be sought to involve as many members as possible in this component of the planning.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, data gathering can be understood as being included in step one — **evaluation**. Collecting accurate information about the church and community is evaluation of the present situation. This becomes an important factor in exploring alternatives for the future. When possibility statements are developed based on the data, the process moves to step two — **recommendation**.



This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are eleven **designs** in this section taking from 50 minutes to 3½ hours to complete.

2. The size of the group always is a factor to consider in **designing**. Some churches may have only 8-10 persons who will be involved in this component. The **designs** indicate when it is appropriate to use smaller groups if the total group numbers more than 8 or 10 persons. The size of the group may require making adjustments in the indicated times. Generally speaking, the more persons, the greater the time needed to complete each step.

3. Note that there are two phases of work in this component: **data gathering** and **data interpretation.** Each **design** is divided into these two phases. It is possible to exercise your creativity in putting these together in different ways from those presented here. For example, your group could do the **data gathering** described in Design Three and then follow it with the **data interpretation** described in Design Four.

4. In this component "possibility statements" are introduced. This phrase is used to describe the outcome of all **data gathering and interpretation** activities. These are statements about concerns, issues or hopes which the group feels are important for the church to work on in the future. Before decisions are made about programs or strategies for the future, it is important for a church to understand what all its options are. Possibility statements are options for the future. Whenever a group examines information about itself, there are almost always a number of "we need to . . ." ideas which occur. There are probably more of these than a church can handle at one time. So they are listed as " possibility statements" and in the work of the next component — **direction selection** — the church makes decisions about the most important ones to work on.

5. Having a variety of good **data** is important to **planning.** Consider using as many of the **designs** as feasible for your congregation. If you can use more than one **design,** select **designs** that give you a variety of kinds of information, for example, "soft" **data** about people's hopes and dreams, and "hard" **data** such as statistical facts about the congregation and community.

6. The Board for Homeland Ministries and some participating conferences are providing 1980 census data and guidance on how to use this data for selected census tracks in which United Church of Christ churches are located. Check to see if your conference is participating in this program and, if so, avail yourself of this important source of **data**. This information could be readily used in Design Seven.

7. Copies of the Dream Trip Worksheet (B-4:5) used in Design One, Preparation for Annual Meeting Worksheet (B-4:31) in Design Nine, Telbedocel Worksheet (B-4:35) in Design Ten, and Last Year's Future Worksheets A-D and Record (B-4:39 to B-4:47) from Design Eleven are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B* for ordering information.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 1

dream trip

Purpose: To consider all the church might be and do, and to create possibility statements from which decisions will be made about future **directions** the church could move.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed. This activity begins in the total group and then moves to small groups. The time assignments may vary depending on the size of the total group and thus on the number of small groups.

Materials Needed: Dream Trip Worksheet (B-4:5) for each person
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the **data** surfaced in this activity.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	5	A leader explains that "brainstorming" is calling out thoughts without explaining or discussing them. Any idea is acceptable and will not be judged. To acquaint the group with the idea, the leader might ask, "If I said the word 'paper,' what thoughts come to mind?" Allow time for five or six responses. Then, cupping your hands in front of you, ask the group, "If I could hold any gift in my hands which we could give to the world, knowing that there were no restrictions and that my hands could hold anything however large or small, concrete or abstract, what gifts would you have us give?" The group calls out ideas.
3.	12	Inform the group that in the same spirit of dreaming of possibilities without restriction, you want them to brainstorm dreams they would like to come true in the life of their church.

Have newsprint posted and one or two persons prepared to write down the dreams as they are called out. Title each sheet of newsprint "Dreams for __(name of church)___ ." Have the participants call out words or short phrases and have them written on the newsprint just as they are called out. No comments or discussion on any of the ideas at this time!

DATA INTERPRETATION

4. 10 Participants return to their small groups and each person is given a copy of the Dream Trip Worksheet. Each individual is to write in three dreams, which may or may not have been mentioned in the group brainstorming, in the space for "Dreams I have for my church," with comments on "Why this is important for me" and "Why this is important for the church."

5. 25-30 Request that everyone briefly share his/her dreams for the future with others in the small group. Then the small group tests whether it is possible to agree on three among those shared as being more commonly valued than others. If three dreams are decided upon they are written on the worksheet as a completion to the phrase, "In the future we hope our church will . . ."

6. 5 Break (If this is part of a longer **design** using other components, a meal break could be scheduled at this point.)

7. 25-30 The total group is reconvened. A leader asks each group to give one of its future **direction** statements, writes it on newsprint, and asks what is valued about it. The leader repeats the process with another group. This round robin continues until all the **directions** have been written on newsprint. If there are obvious overlaps, help the groups formulate one statement rather than have two statements which mean essentially the same thing.

8. 5 A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group about how the **data** they have developed will be handled next. These possible future **directions** become part of the **data** used to determine the church's future and are referred to as "possibility statements" in the **direction selection** component.

It is recommended that this activity be followed immediately by a **direction selection** activity.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 2

learning from records

Purpose: To develop a picture of the church based on the church's annual reports from the past five years, and to formulate possibility statements for future programs from which decisions will be made about **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This activity can be done in a variety of settings. If it is done in a large gathering of members of the congregation, it should be preceded by **community building** and the formation of six smaller groups. It can be done by a task force assigned this specific responsibility. This **design** requires that the church have written annual reports for each of the past five years.

Materials Needed: Copies of the annual reports for each of the last 5 years
Statistical **data** from the *United Church of Christ Yearbook* for the past five years, reproduced or put on newsprint
Newsprint and markers for each small group

Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the **data** surfaced in this activity.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	40	The total group is divided into six smaller groups. If a task force or small group is carrying out this assignment, small groups may have only two or three members. If there are less than 12 persons, then one or more of the smaller groups could be given more than one assignment. One group is given the yearbook **data** and is asked to summarize and comment on trends in membership and finances. a. Is membership growing or declining? b. How have new members been acquired?

c. Is the church school growing or declining?
d. What is the per capita giving for each year?
e. What percentage of the total budget has gone for missions in each of the past five years?

Each of the other five groups is given one of the annual reports from the past five years. Each group is asked to study the report and answer the following questions:

a. What were the most important events and programs in the year you are studying?
b. What new or special activities were tried during the year?
c. What happened during the year which is still making a significant difference in our church life?
d. If you could go back to that year and change one thing or add one thing which would have made a significant difference now, what would it be?
e. What is your overall impression about the strength/weakness of our church in that year?

3. 30 The total group is reconvened and each small group reports its findings, using newsprint to display its material. There is time for clarifying questions people have and for commenting upon the meaning of the **data.**

DATA INTERPRETATION

4. 10 If there are more than 10 persons, small groups of 5-8 are formed. If there are 10 or fewer persons, the following step is done together.

The group reflects on the **data** which has been presented and develops responses to the following two questions and records them on newsprint:

a. Right now, what are the strengths of our church on which we want to build?
b. Right now, what are the major gaps or problems in our church life and program which we want to do something about?

5. 10 The group then lists on a clean sheet of newsprint, completions to the following sentence: "During the next year we want to devote special attention to . . ."

6. 10 If steps 4 and 5 were done in small groups, the total group is reconvened and each small group reports its list of sentence completions. If there are duplications or similarities, they are combined so that there is a single list of statements. These are possibility statements to be considered in the next component. Each statement is to have a single, clear focus.

If steps 4 and 5 were done in the total group, the final list represents the possibility statements to be considered in the next component.

7. 2 A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group about how the possibility statements they have developed will be handled next.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 3

past, present, future

Purpose: To have members determine what is important to them in the church now and what they hope for in the future, and to formulate possibility statements from which decisions will be made about future **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This activity is most suitable as a continuation of the **faith perspective** component with a large gathering of the congregation. **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed.

Materials Needed: Newsprint and markers

Time: 50-60 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces this activity, explains its purpose, previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the results.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	20-25	Small groups are assigned one of the following tasks. There should be an equal number of groups working on each task. a. List on newsprint what from the church's past is still of great value and importance and should be continued or reinstated. b. What in the present life of the church is of such great value and importance it should be continued into the future? c. What hopes and dreams do you have for the church of the future — the church of your grandchildren when they are adults? List these dreams and hopes on newsprint.
		DATA INTERPRETATION
3.	10	Each small group selects 5-7 items from its list and shapes them so that they complete the sentence: "It is important for us to give special attention to . . ."

4.	15-20	The total group is reconvened. Each small group reports its 5-7 items. Overlaps and duplications are eliminated. Each statement should have a single, clear focus. These are possibility statements to be considered in work on the next component.
5.	2	A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled next.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 4

means and ends

Purpose: To gather impressions of **needs** of the church held by members, to distinguish between means and ends, and to formulate possibility statements about the future of the church from which decisions will be made about **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This activity may be done by any group in the church. The **data gathering** occurs in step 2. Steps 3-7 are **data interpretation** and may be used in conjunction with the **data gathering** phase in many of the other **designs** in this component. The **design** assumes that **community building** has taken place and small groups have been formed.

Materials Needed: Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 5 minutes to 1 hour 25 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the possibility statements developed during this activity.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	10	The total group brainstorms completions to the phrase, "This coming year (or whatever period the **planning** is for) we need to . . ." and responses are recorded on newsprint.
		DATA INTERPRETATION
3.	5	A leader introduces the concept of *ends* and *means to an end*. *Ends* are outcomes or deeper expressions of need. *Means to an end* are solutions or ways to achieve the *ends*. Example: An *end* may be to begin a ministry to elderly persons living alone in the neighborhood of the church. *Means to an end* might be to do a neighborhood survey, to begin a neighborhood outreach committee, or to increase the mission budget of the church.

4. 10 If the total group numbers more than 12 persons, divide into small groups of 6-8 persons each. If there are 12 or fewer, the activity continues in the total group.

The group reviews the list of items developed during the brainstorming in step 2. The group decides for each item on the list if it is an end or a means to an end. It places an **E** beside the ends and an **M** beside the means to an end.

5. 5 On a clean sheet of newsprint the group records all of the items identified as ends. The newsprint is headed with the phrase: "During the next year it would be good for our church to . . ."

6. 20-30 The group reviews all of those items marked **M** (means to an end) and states the outcome of deeper expression of need toward which the means is directed. (Example: If one of the brainstorm items identified as a means to an end was "publish a monthly newsletter," the outcome or deeper expression of need may be for better communication within the congregation, or more contact with the inactive, etc.) Frequently you can get from an **M** (means to an end) to an **E** (end) by asking questions such as: Why do we want to do this? What would be accomplished if we did this? What is the best thing which could happen if we did this? (You may want to keep the list of means to an end for later reference when developing a **plan of action**.)

Note: The reason for differentiating between means (solutions, strategies) and ends (outcomes, deeper/real needs) is that this helps avoid the risk of having a solution or strategy become a **goal.** Frequently, there is more than one solution to a problem or more than one way to achieve a **goal.** In the example used above, if the real need or desired outcome is "better communication within the congregation," publishing a monthly newsletter is only one of many means for achieving this. If the group focuses only on publishing a monthly newsletter without considering other means, it may overlook many other good or better ideas.

It will not always be possible to make clear distinctions between means and ends. The leaders should let the group work through to their best judgment on each item and then go on to the next.

7. 10-20 The group adds the ends developed in step 6 to the list begun in step 5. The total list is reviewed and duplications or overlapping statements are eliminated. Each statement should have a single, clear focus. These are possibility statements to be considered in the next component.

If steps 4-6 have been done in small groups, the total group is reconvened and reviews the lists of statements, eliminates duplications and overlapping statements. These are possibility statements to be considered in the next component.

8. 2 A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled in the next component.

(See following additional information and examples.)

EXAMPLES OF STEPS

Step 2: Brainstorm	Step 4: Assign E or M	Step 6: What is the end we're seeking? Why do we want to do the means?
paint the basement	M	provide youth facilities
know each other better	E	
have more money	M	support our local mission
have more church suppers	M	fellowship**
sing more in worship	M	increase meaning of worship
fix the parsonage	M	
get new members	M	etc.
have a young couples club	M	
meet community needs	E	
increase mission giving	E*	

*Is "increase mission giving" an end or means to an end? Not sure? Imagine the possibility for conversation around the decision about which it is.

**When condensing (step 7), "fellowship" might be seen in relationship to or the same as "know each other better" listed as an end and be absorbed by it rather than appear twice in the final list.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION

design 5

what others think

Purpose: To gather impressions of the church held by persons in the community, to compare these impressions with those held by members of the church, and to formulate possibility statements about the future of the church from which decisions will be made about **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This activity is done by a special task force which conducts interviews with persons in the community. These persons then report on their interviews and reflect on the meaning of what they discovered.

Materials Needed: Copies of the questionnaire to be used in the interviews
Newsprint and markers

Additional Preparation: The planners will have to decide with whom the interviews are to be done. Several options exist. They could be done at a local shopping area with persons willing to participate. They could be done with selected leaders of the community. If the latter option is chosen, it will be necessary to make appointments for the interviews prior to the interview day.

Time: 2 hours 45 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the information collected during the interviews.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	30	The interview questionnaire is distributed to the interviewers. The leader demonstrates an interview. Persons are paired up and practice interviewing one another. The group discusses possible problems and how to handle them.
3.	20	Assignments are made and individuals travel to their interviews.

4.	30	The interviews are conducted.
5.	15	Individuals travel back to the church.
6.	30	Each person reports on his/her interviews. The learnings are recorded on newsprint.

DATA INTERPRETATION

7.	15	The group identifies major similarities and major differences in the way the community views the church and the way the members view the church. A list is developed on newsprint of "learnings we had today about our church."
8.	20	The group develops a newsprint list of statements which complete the following sentence: "During the next year we need to give special attention in our church to . . ." The group selects the 10-12 most important statements from the list. Each statement should have a single, clear focus. These are possibility statements to be considered in the next component.
9.	2	A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled next.

A SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you know where _____ *(name of church)* _____ Church is located?
2. When you think of _____ *(name of church)* _____ Church, what is the first thing which comes to mind?
3. The most important contribution of _____ *(name of church)* _____ Church to our community is . . .
4. Among all the churches of our community, the unique thing about _____ *(name of church)* _____ Church is . . .
5. The most important need of our community is . . .
6. What one thing would you like to say to the members of _____ *(name of church)* _____ Church?

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 6

building on the faith perspective

Purpose: To develop a checklist of concerns growing out of a group's participation in the **faith perspective** component, and to formulate possibility statements about the future of the church from which decisions will be made about **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This immediately follows a **faith perspective** activity and utilizes the small groups which have been working together.

Materials Needed: Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected, and what use will be made of the **data** surfaced during this activity.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	15	The small groups reflect on the **faith perspective** experience and list on newsprint their responses to the question: "What checklist of concerns does our **faith perspective** experience suggest for the health of our church?"
		DATA INTERPRETATION
3.	15	Referring to its checklist of concerns, each small group is asked to write completions to the following phrase in the three suggested categories: "We need to do special work on . . ."

In our Congregation	In our Community	In our World
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4.	10	Each small group is asked to select 2-4 items from each category to which it feels the church needs to give priority attention during the next year. Each statement is to have a single focus.
5.	15	The total group is reconvened and each small group reports its priority selections which are placed on newsprint. The group reviews the total list and eliminates duplication. Each statement is to have a single, clear focus. These are the possibility statements to be considered in the next component.
6.	2	A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled next.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 7

analyzing demographics

Purpose: To analyze and interpret demographic **data** about the church which has been collected, and to formulate possibility statements about the future of the church from which decisions will be made about **directions** the church could move.

Setting: This is a **design** for **data interpretation** and presupposes that **data** already has been gathered. This activity can be done by a large group working in smaller units, or it can be done by a task force assigned this specific responsibility.

Materials Needed: Information about the church which has been gathered, duplicated so everyone has a copy, or displayed on newsprint. (This **design** is particularly suited for analyzing demographic **data** about the church and community which shows such things as income levels, age and sex distribution, size of families, etc.)
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 25 minutes to 1 hour 35 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
		DATA GATHERING
		This is done prior to this activity and put in a form available to all participants.
		DATA INTERPRETATION
1.	20-30	A leader distributes the previously gathered **data** and familiarizes the group with how it was secured and how to read it in the form in which it is displayed. Time is provided for persons to ask questions and/or make comments about the meaning of the **data.** The leader can facilitate discussion by asking questions such as, "Does any of this information substantiate some thoughts you have had?" "Are there any surprises in the **data**?"
2.	20	If there are more than 10 persons, small groups of 5-8 persons are formed and each group is assigned a specific segment of the information to work on. If there are 10 or fewer persons, the group will stay together to work on the **data.**

The group is asked to record responses to the following question on newsprint: "What would our church and community be like if this information or the trends contained in this information remain true for the next ten years?"

3. 15 The group is then asked to restate each of its entries on a separate sheet of newsprint to complete the phrase: "In the future, we want our church to . . ."

Note: Some of the entries on the original list will be positive and lend themselves to being restated. (Example: In the future we want our church to carry on a special ministry to the increasing number of older persons living in our neighborhood.) The negative entries need to be stated in such a way as to make them positive hopes for the future. (Example: "We will not have any youth" [and projections show there will be a number of youth in the community] becomes "In the future, we want our church to have a vital youth ministry.")

It may be helpful for the leader to work through an illustration with the group before it begins working on its list.

4. 25 If steps 2 and 3 were done in the total group, the completions listed represent possibility statements and you are ready to move to the next component, **direction selection.**

If steps 2 and 3 were done in small groups, each group is asked to choose 3-5 out of its list of completions as the most important **directions** for the church to work on. Each statement is to have a single, clear focus.

Each small group reports to the total group its list of 3-5 choices and they are listed on newsprint. Once all have been reported, review the list for duplications, assuring that each statement has a single, clear focus. These are the possibility statements to be considered in the next component.

5. 5 A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled next.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 8

feelings and facts

Purpose: To enable participants to identify facts and feelings which impact the community and the church and to interpret that **data** for the development of possibility statements.

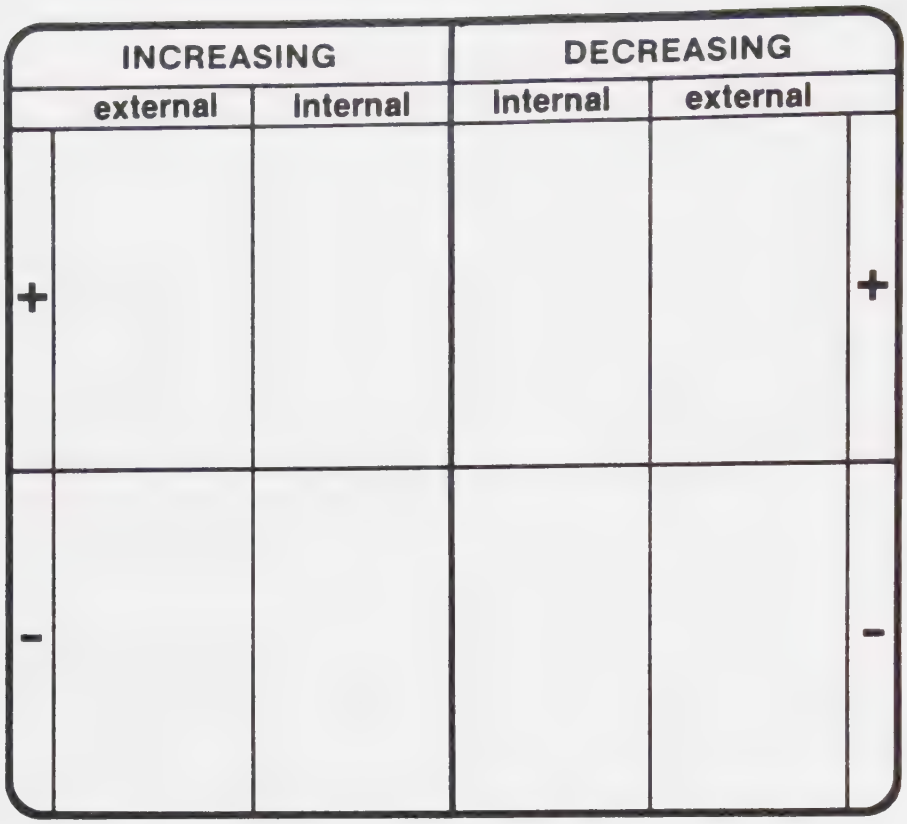
Setting: **Community building** has taken place and groups of 5-8 persons have been formed.

A study committee has prepared and studied factual **data** about the community and congregation such as: (a) comparison of community demographics (age, sex, income, marital status, education or other such information) with that of the congregation; (b) church financial and membership trends over the last ten years; (c) community growth projections; (d) what people of the community say about or characterize as being true of the church and its life as a part of the community; (e) interviews with 10% or more of the church members about their realized and unrealized expectations of the church in the last 3- 5 years. Such a study committee will need at least 4 months' preparation. A summary report of no more than 4 pages would have been distributed for all church members to read and review at the time designated in this **design.**

Materials Needed: Study committee's summary report
Newsprint and markers
Charts for each small group and for leader

Time: 3 hours

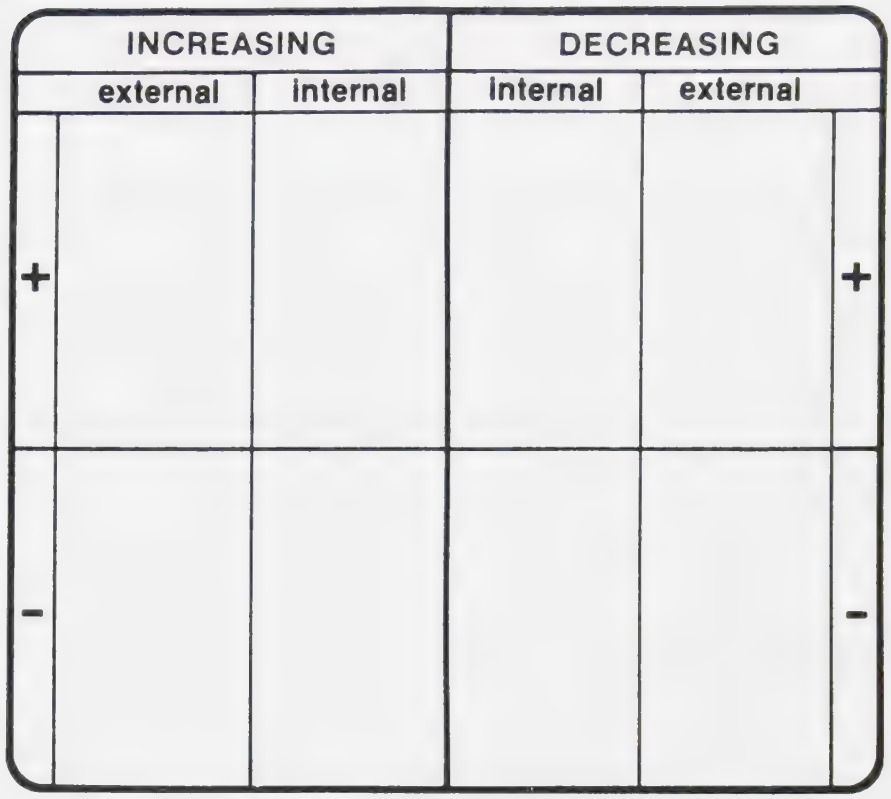
STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	5	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose in the **planning** process.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	10	A leader points out the charts on newsprint on the walls near the small groups and indicates how they are the same as the one being used by the leader. The chart looks like this:



As a leader places comments on the model chart before the entire group, an appointed recorder does the same on each small group's newsprint.

Starting with the upper left corner, a leader solicits responses for the "increasing influences" side of the newsprint.

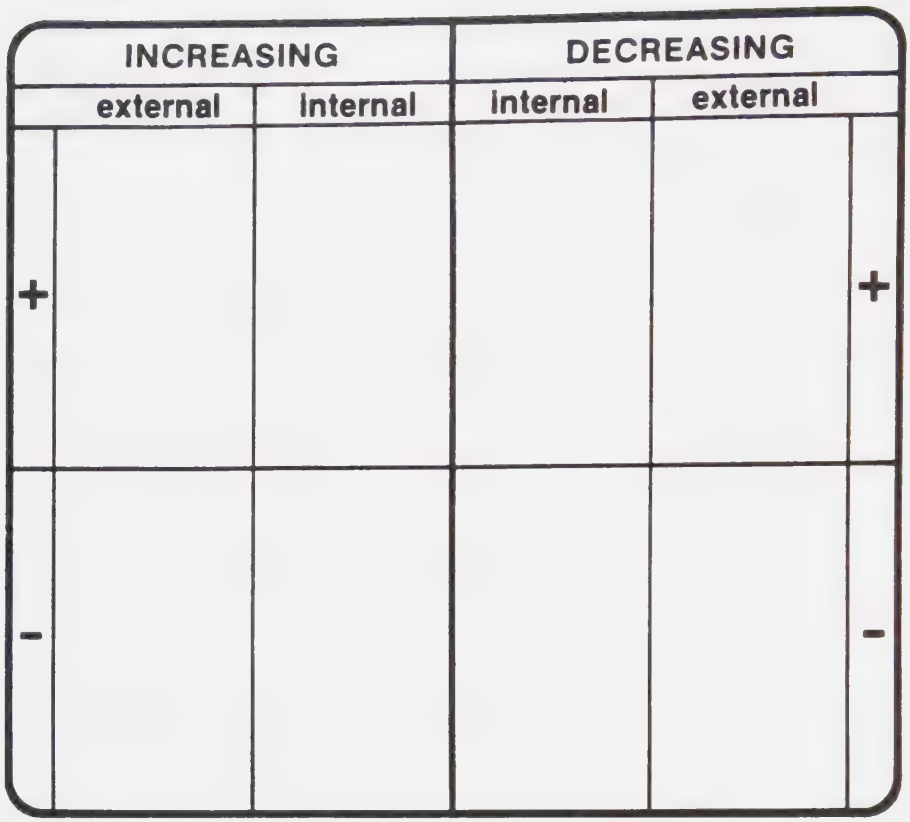
a. The leader asks, "What are some things going on in the life outside the church in our community which have positive impact on us?" The group calls some out quickly and without discussion (brainstorming). The leader writes them on the newsprint, writing small but legibly, and small group recorders do the same. The leader does only 2 or 3 and draws a line to the external section. Using a different color marker, the leader does the same for positive internal impacts of the church, soliciting only 2 or 3 responses for influences within the church.



b. The leader solicits a few negative internal and external influences and places them in the lower left corner, doing just enough to give people some experience with it.

3. 10 Each small group is asked to continue to fill in the left side of the newsprint. The recorder is cautioned to write small but legibly.

4. 10 The leader introduces the diminishing influences side of the newsprint in similar fashion, beginning with the upper right corner first (external positive). The leader solicits things which once seemed crucial within the life of the community but are losing ground and then solicits things in the life of the church which have been positive influences but are losing ground. The group continues using the brainstorming technique and moves to each category.



5.	10	A leader asks each small group to continue to fill in the right side of the newsprint, cautioning recorders to write small but legibly.
6.	10	The total group reconvenes. A leader asks each recorder to call out some examples of the group's work.
7.	15	Break
8.	5	A leader introduces the chairperson and members of the study committee. The chairperson passes out their summary report which contains information but no interpretations or implications and briefly outlines (a) how they went about their work and (b) what is contained in the summary.
9.	10	The group reads the summary report silently.
10.	10	A leader helps the group understand the report. Study committee members respond to questions.
11.	1	The leader thanks the chairperson and the committee members.

12. 30 The small groups add to any sections of the newsprint using the **data** of the study committee and any other available information. Persons from the study committee are available as resource persons to the small groups.

13. 15 Break

DATA INTERPRETATION

14. 20 A leader asks each small group to review its newsprint sheets and list major trends that will influence the future of our church. The groups then list at least three but no more than five important possibility statements that the church needs to address in the near future, based on the major trends. The possibility statements are completions of the statement, "In the future our church will..." Post the possibility statements for all to see.

MAJOR INFLUENCING TRENDS	**POSSIBILITY STATEMENTS In the future our church will:**

15. 20 A leader puts a composite list of all the possibility statements on newsprint, securing one at a time from each of the small groups, not listing duplications.

A leader indicates the role of this list in the ongoing **planning** process.

Note: This design is easily adapted for a weekend retreat where councils, consistories, or other central governing groups do **planning** for local churches.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 9

annual meeting

Purpose: To secure perceptions of possibilities of the future for the church from church leaders and to share these with the wider membership in an annual meeting.

Setting: Prior to the annual meeting, all committees, boards and groups, plus individuals who hold leadership positions such as pastor, choir director, and church school superintendent fill out Preparation for Annual Meeting Worksheets (B-4:31). Committees, boards and groups spend one hour in their meetings talking about what needs to be reported on the worksheets and appoint someone to represent them in the collating groups.

The collating group meets for an evening to review reports given them and prepare a report to be given to the wider membership. This report will include a sense of (a) what has happened in the past year, (b) ongoing and projected activities and (c) ten possibility statements based on the worksheets which could lead the church in the immediate future in a meaningful way.

The collating group prepares newsprint or printed materials which summarize their findings for presentation to the wider membership.

The collating group could be a sub-group of the official board of the church, the total official board, or a specially appointed **planning** committee. In any event, they need to be viewed as representative of church leadership.

It is assumed that they are giving their report to the annual meeting of the church and that the people gathered in that meeting have had **community building** which has formed them into small groups of 5-8 persons. This activity begins with small groups.

Materials Needed: Reports, either on newsprint or printed, from completed Preparation for Annual Meeting Worksheets

Newsprint and markers

Time: 2 hours

1. 3 A leader explains the purpose of this activity and previews what will happen, what outcome is expected and what use will be made of the **data.**

DATA GATHERING

2. 15 Members of the collating group

   a. Explain work done prior to the annual meeting and express appreciation for the cooperation of individuals and groups.

   b. Present, with the aid of newsprint or printed materials, what has happened in the past year and a feel for ongoing and projected activities.

DATA INTERPRETATION

3. 2 A leader asks the small groups to talk about what they heard and each group to write three completions to the sentence (posted on newsprint) "We have heard what our leaders have been doing this past year and some of what they project and we feel it important to say to them . . ."

4. 10 Small groups reflect ánd write three completions.

5. A leader asks each of the groups to read its completions. Additional observations may be made by any participant.

6. 10 Break

7. 23 A leader introduces members of the collating group and tells what the group has done. A leader outlines expectations for continuing work to be done at this meeting. Each member of the collating group is asked to present a possibility statement, "We need to give special attention to . . ." and a brief statement of support. Up to ten presentations are made. Each is placed on newsprint and numbered.

8. 5 A leader requests that each group

   a. Review its understanding of each of the possibility statements. If further clarification is needed, the person who presented it is available to the group.

   b. Decide if there are other possibility statements which should be written and need to be added. If so, write no more than two on newsprint, using the form, "We need to give special attention to . . ."

c. Assume that only five of the possibility statements could be followed, including those written by the group, and choose those five most important to it. Indicate the choices on newsprint.

9.	30	Each group carries out the instructions given in step 8 and appoints a person to report to the total group.
10.	10	The total group reconvenes. As new possibility statements are reported, they are assigned a number and added to the original list. A leader puts a small check beside each statement chosen as important on the newsprint version as the reports are given.
11.	2	A leader summarizes this activity and informs the group how the possibility statements will be handled next.

Note: The annual meeting, while in session, may move directly to **direction selection**. If the **direction selection** is to take place in another setting, plans for **celebration** and closure of the meeting would need to be made. For further help in planning an annual meeting, see *Designing a Local Church Annual Meeting*, available from Church Leadership Resources, 1400 North Seventh Street, St. Louis, MO 63106.

preparation for annual meeting worksheet

Name of Group/Individual

Purpose of Group or Position (the general comprehensive long-range reasons why your group/position exists and should continue to exist)

Activities/Programs (A brief statement on each describing what was done, who was involved or affected by it and what resulted from it)

undertaken and completed in the past year	ongoing	projected for next year

A sense of what you/your group needs to give first attention to in the immediate future

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

A sense of what you/your group feels the church needs to give first attention to in the immediate future (which may or may not include concerns mentioned in the list above)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design10

telbedocel

Purpose: To use a theological image of the church to gather **data** about itself and its mission as a way of preparing for setting **directions**.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and small groups of 5-8 persons have been formed.

Gabriel Fackre, in his book entitled *Do and Tell: Engagement Evangelism in the 70s**, suggests that a congregation can see itself as a People of the Story. As such, it has a sense of inreach/nurture and outreach/mission.

Inreach and outreach revolve around four basic themes found in the People of the Story. They are:

Kerygma—**tel**ling the Story
Koinonia—**be**ing the Story
Diakonia—**do**ing the Story
Leitourgia—**cel**ebrating the Story

These four themes get played out in two arenas: life within the congregation (nurture/inreach), and life beyond the congregation (mission/outreach). The Telbedocel Worksheet portrays this and helps to see that there are eight possible considerations to the overall image.

A congregation may not be able to, or desire to, be equally engaged in all eight focuses at one time. Instead, given the opportunity to analyze its situation, it may lift up certain focuses for primary consideration.

Persons preparing to lead this **design** would do well to read Gabriel Fackre's book prior to administering the **design**. Also, it might prove helpful if the congregation were familiar with Fackre's insights, perhaps from a sermon.

Materials Needed: Telbedocel Worksheets
Newsprint and markers
Instructions for step 3 on newsprint

Time: 2 hours

*Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973.

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader explains the purpose of this activity and its place in the **planning** process and briefly previews what will happen.
		DATA GATHERING
2.	13	A leader introduces participants to the elements of Telbedocel by (a) describing them, (b) passing out the worksheet, and (c) beginning to fill it out and (d) allowing some time for clarification.
3.	45	Small groups are assigned the following tasks and carry them out: a. Fill in what is already happening and what could happen on the worksheet in the boxes above the heavy line. b. If additional categories are needed, use the available spaces below the heavy line. c. Individuals score each category according to the scale at the bottom of the worksheet for "want" and "have." Share the scores in the small groups. DATA INTERPRETATION d. Reflect on the scoring and write as a group 3 to 5 completions to the phrase "in the future our church will address..." These statements are to reflect the most important things they could work on in the immediate future. e. Each group is to appoint a person to report the sentence completions and the reasons for them to the entire group.
4.	10	Break
5.	20	Each group reports one of its sentence completions. When all groups have given one response, then a second sentence is heard from each group. As each completion is offered, the reporter indicates the rationale behind it. A leader records each sentence completion as it is given. The reports continue until all responses have been heard. If there are duplications or similarities, they are combined, so that there is a single list of statements.
6.	30	A leader thanks the groups for their work and informs the groups about how the **data** they have developed will be handled later. These possible future **directions** become part of the **data** used to determine the church's future and are referred to as possibility statements in the **direction selection** component.

Note: This **design** easily could be adapted to be a **faith perspective design** much the same as some of the **faith perspective designs** can be adapted for the purpose of **data gathering**.

telbedocel worksheet

Nurture/Inreach		People of the Story	Mission Outreach	
Have	Already doing	Tell the Story *Kerygma*	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want
Have	Already doing	Be the Story *Koinonia*	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want
Have	Already doing	Do the Story *Diakonia*	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want
Have	Already doing	Celebrate the Story *Leitourgia*	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want
Have	Already doing	_____ the Story	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want
Have	Already doing	_____ the Story	Already doing	Have
Want	Could do		Could do	Want

Scoring: 1-very much 2—somewhat 3—not sure 4—very little 5—not at all

DATA GATHERING AND INTERPRETATION design 11

last year's future

Purpose: To identify clear directions for the church in light of a common concern for unimplemented past priorities.

Setting: **Community building** has taken place and a common **faith perspective** of the church has been reaffirmed. This activity begins in the total group and then moves to small groups of 4-6 people.

Materials Needed: Last Year's Future Worksheets A-D (B-4:37 through B-4:45)
Newsprint: Record for Last Year's Future (B-4:47)
Newsprint and markers for each small group

Time: 3½ hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	5	A leader introduces this activity, previews what will happen, what outcome is expected and what use will be made of the results. The leader explains that the purpose of the activity is to reach common understanding on how the church is presently functioning. Four worksheets are available as aids to this process.
2.	10	The leader selects, or the group decides by consensus, which one of the four aids to utilize. If this is a group decision, each participant is asked to scan quickly Worksheets A-D. The leader asks: "Which one of these aids will give us the most helpful information on how our church is presently functioning? " and the group decides by consensus or vote.
		DATA GATHERING
3.	45	Tasks on the selected worksheet are divided among the small groups. In the case of Worksheet C, each question should be addressed by two groups.

4.	20-30	The total group is reconvened. Each small group reports on its findings, using newsprint to display its material.
5.	15	Newsprint of the church's most recently activated statements of directions and/or goals are displayed by the leader on the newsprint copy of the Record of Last Year's Future. Participants are asked to assess the degree of implementation of each goal by placing an "X" with a marker on the line indicating his/her opinion. This can be done during the break. (This is not a good time for a meal break.)
6.	15	Break DATA INTERPRETATION
7.	5	In the total group the leader now circles those of "last year's future" priorities which appear to have been successfully implemented and those which have not. The group also now has common knowledge of how the church presently functions in significant ways. With these two pieces of important information, the group is now ready to write possibility statements that can lead directly to decision-making on the future **directions** of the church.
8.	45	The original small groups reflect on this **data** and develop responses to the following two questions: 1. In the light of our current information, what action should we recommend for each of the present priorities and goals? • recycle as is • adapt • replace 2. In what **direction**(s) should our church now place its major resources of time, talent, personal commitment, and funds? The responses should be in the form of simple, clear completions of a sentence beginning "It is important for us to give special attention to . . ."
9.	25-30	The total group is reconvened and each group presents its recommendations. Overlaps and duplications are eliminated. These are the possibility statements to be considered in the work on the next component.
10.	10	The leader asks the total group the following key question: Are there any persons who need to review the **data** from which these possibilities are drawn? **Direction selection** should not take place until such persons have had an opportunity to comment on **data**, its interpretation and use so far.
11.	3	The leader summarizes the activity and informs the group of how its work will next be handled.

last year's future worksheet a

Purpose: This worksheet is used to understand better how lay persons are used to carry out the goals of the church.

	yes	somewhat	no	comment
1. The current directions and goals of our church are presently well understood by church members.				
2. People volunteering for jobs in our church seem to know clearly what they're being asked to do.				
3. There is accurate knowledge of the talents and expertise that exist within our congregation.				
4. There appear to be rewards for persons filling the major jobs in our church.				
5. Recruitment efforts in our church have been relatively easy.				
6. Persons can expect training for specific work in our church.				
7. Persons are supported by professional staff during the course of their lay work for our church.				
8. Volunteers in our church receive meaningful recognition when the job is over.				
9. There is careful decision to continue, discontinue or change the tasks of church members.				

last year's future worksheet b

This worksheet is suitable for a multi-staffed church.

Purpose: To understand better the nature of relationships between congregational units in the church in terms of how the work of the church is divided and the manner by which church units are coordinated.

1. In total group, list up to 10 of the most significant units in the church (including the professional staff).
2. Complete this chart for each unit in relationship to all other units. A sample is shown.

unit	clarity of their goals	what they need from each other	how often they need to meet together	quality of their relationship	how disagreements have been handled historically (avoidance, bargaining, confrontation)

last year's future worksheet c

Purpose: To understand better how the church functions on an overall basis. List below three words which describe the following aspects of your church (each question should be described by two groups):

aspects of church	description 1	description 2	description 3
1. present priorities			
2. the way the church's work is divided			
3. rewards for: a. professional staff b. lay workers	a. b.		
4. decision-making process			
5. chief constraints			
6. relationship to association and conference			
7. ability to cope with conflict and/or disagreement			
8. present lay leadership			
9. receptivity to new suggestions			
10. budgeting processes			

last year's future worksheet d

Purpose: To understand better how the church tends to function historically and will probably continue to function unless strong desire to change is articulated and action planned.

List below, using group or role names rather than individuals' names.

question	response	who benefits
1. How do we show support for each other?		
2. How do we learn of individual needs?		
3. How do we decide whether an activity should be continued, discontinued, or adopted?		
4. Who are the major decision makers?		
5. Who are the most active, energetic folks?		
6. Who are most satisfied?		
7. Who are the most dissatisfied?		
8. How do we solve conflicts in our church?		
9. What happens when someone suggests a new way of functioning?		
10. When do major decisions get made?		

record of last year's future

goal (use key word)	generally ignored	presently underway	successfully being implemented

Choosing, from all the possible future directions, a few high priorities on which to work.

This component follows the data-gathering activities within our congregation and community which have resulted in possibility statements about the future of our church. The purpose of this component is to review, understand, and make decisions from these statements. To work at all of them equally may involve working at too many things without enough energy and resources to fully accomplish any of them. So, to assure that some directions for the future get special attention, it is necessary to choose from the options. These priorities are selected in light of our perception of the present situation and need.

It is possible in this component to begin the process of surfacing ideas for the plan of action for the selected directions. At this point the commitment and interest of individuals in working on specific directions are tested for.

Ways should be sought to involve as many members of the congregation as possible in this component of the planning.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, direction selection involves both **recommendation** and **decision**. All possible future directions open to the church are identified, compared, and contrasted. Once all alternatives have been identified and explored, the process moves to the third step in the power cycle—decision making—and the directions for the future are selected from among all alternatives.

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights and adaptations to share.

1. There are five **designs** in this section requiring from 20 minutes to 1 hour 15 minutes to complete.

2. A key issue in this component is to make **decisions** not only about what is important for the church to be working on, but how much is possible. These **decisions** will need to be made in light of all the on-going activity already scheduled in the life of the congregation. Leaders should be prepared to offer guidance to the group as it considers this.

3. **Designs** in this component call for individual and total group work. Small groups are a good technique for thorough discussion, but decisions should be made in the total group setting.

4. All the **designs** in this component require beginning with possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component. A church may gather **data** in more than one way and, thus, have possibility statements from more than one source. It will be necessary for some leaders to review these statements and put them into consistent form for this component. This can be done by a small group using the following procedure:
   a. Place all of the possibility statements on newsprint listing their source.
   b. Review the statements and cluster them into categories according to their subject or area of concern.
   c. Each category is reviewed for overlap and duplication. Condense as possible but make sure that each possibility statement has a clear, single focus. If two quite similar statements are combined into one, make sure that both **data** sources continue to be identified with the statement. Make all statements as parallel as possible in style without changing the meanings intended by the groups which created them.
   d. Place the final list of statements on newsprint indicating the **data** source for each. They are now in a usable form for this component.

5. The optional step in Designs One and Two should not be used if Design One is used in the next component, **goal development.** The Idea Worksheet is to be incorporated into that **design.**

6. Copies of the Directional Statement Score Sheet (B-5:5) and the Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) used in Designs One and Two are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B*.

DIRECTION SELECTION design 1

weighing

Purpose: To decide, from all possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component, priority **directions** for the church in the next **program period.**

Setting: All the **data** collected have been formulated into possibility statements. These have been placed on newsprint and lettered according to the Directional Statement Score Sheet (B-5:5).

If this activity immediately follows the **data gathering and interpretation** activity in which all possibility statements have been developed and interpreted, go on to step 1 below.

If time has elapsed since the possibility statements were developed, or if statements are being introduced from additional sources, provide time for persons to review and understand each statement. If this is done, additional time will need to be added for this activity.

Work for this activity is done individually and in the total group.

Optional techniques: The use of the Directional Statement Score Sheet to make selections from the list of possibility statements can be done in a variety of ways:

a. The list of possibility statements and a copy of the score sheet could be mailed to every member with the request that the score sheet be completed and returned to the church. The results are tabulated and reported to the congregation.
b. The possibility statements could be posted in a large area, such as a fellowship hall, on a Sunday morning. Persons coming to worship or leaving worship are encouraged to go to the area, study the possibility statements, and fill out a score sheet. Some leaders could be stationed in the room to answer questions and distribute the score sheets. The results are tabulated and reported to the congregation the next Sunday.
c. All committees and organizations during their meetings one month could be introduced to the possibility statements and given opportunity to fill out the score sheet.

Materials Needed: Possibility statements with assigned letters recorded on newsprint
Directional Statement Score Sheet (B-5:5) for each participant
Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) for each participant (if optional step 5 is used)
Newsprint and markers

Time: 50-60 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	10	A leader distributes the Directional Statement Score Sheet and instructs the group in its use. Participants weigh each possibility statement.
3.	15	Tabulate all the score sheets and record for all to see. The period for tabulation is a good time for the group to have a break. (It is usually possible to have some of the participants help with the tabulation.)
4.	20	The total group is reconvened and the results of the weighing process reported. The group must then decide how many of the top priority **directions** to select to be worked on during the next **program period** of the church. Criteria to use in making this decision might be: • What seems like a manageable number of **directions** given the size of the congregation and its resources? • How do the scores from the weighing process look? Is there a decided break after the top 3 or 4 or 5? • What is the judgment of the **planning** leaders? What is their opinion or what recommendation have they made? The decision might be easier if lesser priorities are delegated to the **planning group** or **official board** for them to look at and work on if resources become available beyond these necessary to achieve the top priorities.
5.	Optional Step	This step will be especially useful in situations in which the group gathered for this activity will not meet again. The ideas surfaced in this step are to be passed on to those responsible for **goal development** and the **plan of action**. This step is not to be used if Design One in the **goal development** component is used.
	10	Each person is given an Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) which lists all **congregational units**, and writes down ideas for each **unit** to consider for the different **directions** chosen. Anyone willing to work on any of the **directions** or suggested ideas should indicate this by placing a check in column B of the worksheet.
6.	3	A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance in the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

idea worksheet

congregational units	directions	ideas	a	b

A. I am willing to describe this idea further. Place a check in Column A.
B. I am willing to work on carrying out this direction or idea. Place a check in Column B.

Name _____ Telephone _____

DIRECTION SELECTION

design 2

weighing by categories

Purpose: To decide, from all possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component, priority **directions** for the church's work in the next **program period.**

To insure a programmatic balance between nurture of persons, organizational strength, and outward mission in the program of the congregation.

Setting: All the **data** collected has been formulated into possibility statements. These have been placed on newsprint and assigned letters according to the Directional Statement Score Sheet.

If this activity immediately follows the **data gathering and interpretation** activity in which all the possibility statements have been developed and interpreted, go on to step 1 below.

If time has elapsed since the possibility statements were developed, or if statements are being introduced from additional sources, provide time for persons to review and understand each statement. If this is done, additional time will need to be added for this activity.

Work in this activity is done individually and in the total group

Materials Needed: Possibility statements with assigned letters recorded on newsprint.
Directional Statement Score Sheet (B-5:5) for each person adapted for this activity, so each of the three columns is headed with one of the following categories:
Nurture of Persons Organizational Strength Mission
Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) for each participant (if optional step 6 is used)
Newsprint and markers (B-5:7)

Time: 1 hour 5 minutes to 1 hour 15 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.

2.	15	A leader introduces the three program categories and helps the group understand what each means. The total group categorizes each possibility statement under one of the three headings. This is done by consensus through group discussion. It should be done rather quickly. If there is strong disagreement within the group about where to place one or more of the statements, place it in both categories.
3.	10	A leader introduces the Directional Statement Score Sheet and instructs the group in its use. Participants weigh each possibility statement.
4.	15	Tabulate all score sheets and record the results for all to see. The period of tabulation is a good time for the group to have a break. (It is usually possible to have some of the participants help with the tabulation.)
5.	20	The total group is reconvened and the results of the three categories of the weighing process are reported. The group then decides the top priority **directions** in each category for the next **program period.**
6.	Optional Step	This step will be especially useful in situations in which the group gathered for this activity will not meet again. The ideas surfaced in this step are to be passed on to those responsible for **goal development** and the **plan of action.** This step is not to be used if Design One in the **goal development** component is used.
	10	Each person is given an Idea Worksheet which lists all the **congregational units,** and writes down ideas for each **unit** to consider for the different **directions** chosen. Anyone willing to work on any of the **directions** or suggested ideas should indicate this by placing a check in column B of the worksheet.
7.	2	A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance in the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

DIRECTION SELECTION

design 3

marking

Purpose: To decide, from all possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component, priority **directions** for the church in the next **program period.**

Setting: All **data** collected has been formulated into possibility statements. These have been placed on newsprint with wide margins on the left and right.

If this activity immediately follows the **data gathering and interpretation** activity in which all the possibility statements have been developed and interpreted, go on to step 1 below.

If time has elapsed since the possibility statements were developed, or if statements are being introduced from additional sources, provide time for persons to review and understand each statement. If this is done, additional time will need to be added for this activity.

All work for this activity is done in the total group.

Materials Needed: Possibility statements recorded on newsprint with wide margins on each side
Pencil, pen or crayon for each person
Newsprint and markers

Time: 50 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	15	The possibility statements recorded on newsprint are placed around the room. Persons are asked to mill around the room, read all possibility statements, and mark each one as follows: If a person has a strong positive feeling concerning the statement he/she is to put a small + to the left of the statement.

If a person has a strong negative feeling concerning the statement he/she is to put a small – to the right of the statement.

If a person does not understand a statement or does not have a strong feeling about it he/she should not place a mark beside it.

As persons finish there can be an informal fellowship time with refreshments while the leaders tabulate the markings. This is done on the newsprint sheet by writing the total number of +'s and –'s for each statement with felt tip markers large enough for all to see.

3. 30 The total group is reconvened and the results of the marking process reported. Statements receiving sizable minus votes, indicating strong resistance, and items receiving sizable plus and minus votes, indicating difference of viewpoint or conflict, should be assigned to the **planning group** or **official board** for further consideration.

The group must then decide how many of the top priority **directions** to select to be worked on during the next **program period** of the church.

Each person is asked to choose no more than three using the following criteria:

a. At this moment I would risk saying that God really wants this to happen.

b. At this moment I really want this to happen.

As each statement is read, persons who have selected it based on the two criteria raise their hands. This is recorded on the newsprint.

4. 3 A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance in the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

DIRECTION SELECTION

design 4

standing together

Purpose: To decide, from all possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component, priority **directions** for the church in the next **program period**.

Setting: Possibility statements have been categorized by a previous activity as in the **design** on page B-4:17. This **design** will be more productive if people know each other fairly well and there are no more than 50 persons in the total group.

Materials Needed: Possibility statements recorded individually on newsprint

Time: 30 minutes per category; 1½ hours total

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process. The leader tells the group that there will be a good deal of movement and conversation during the activity. The group should be ready to wrestle with the future and have some fun at the same time.
2.	3	The leader points to all possibility statements of the first category which have been posted around the room. A category (congregation, community, or world) is announced. Persons are asked to choose the possibility statement which they feel is the most important of all those posted for the church to consider in this category and then to move to that newsprint. While doing so they may want to encourage others to join them. At the leader's signal, persons have 2 minutes to place themselves.
3.	7	Each group appoints a spokesperson to report to the total group. Then the small group discusses why the statement is important.
4.	10	The total group reconvenes. Each spokesperson offers a brief speech signifying the importance of the possibility statement.

5. 8 A leader announces that everyone will be able to change his or her stand about the most important possibility statement. People will be given an opportunity to move from statement to statement. The desired outcome is everyone standing by the same possibility statement.

This means that people may change their minds a number of times. There probably will be some good-natured convincing going on as people talk together. The hope is that by the time this is over, all participants are comfortable enough with a given possibility statement that they may "stand together."

Take a break and repeat Steps 2-5 for the other categories.

DIRECTION SELECTION

design 5

by vote of hands

Purpose: To decide, from all possibility statements developed in the **data gathering and interpretation** component, priority **directions** for the church in the next **program period**.

Setting: The **data** collected have been formulated into possibility statements. Possibility statements are numbered on newsprint. People are seated so that they can easily see them.

Materials Needed: Possibility statements with assigned numbers recorded on newsprint
Paper and pencil for each participant

Time: 20 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	1	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	4	A leader indicates that each participant is given a specific number of votes. This number is one-half of the total number of possibility statements.* Example: if there are 14 possibility statements, each person is given 7 votes.
3.	8	A leader states that people will be asked to indicate ones for which they want to vote. Participants are asked to think about their choices and mark down on a piece of paper the number or letter of those statements for which they intend to vote.
4.	5	The leader reads each possibility statement and each person raises a hand for a vote. The votes are recorded next to the statements (using a marker different in color).

5. 2 A leader describes what will happen with these decisions about **directions**.

*If a discussion needs to be held about how many directions are manageable, allow additional time so the decision can be made by the group. If the decision is to be made elsewhere, indicate where and when. If the decision was made ahead of time, indicate that.

Refining directions and translating them into statements describing the specific and measurable outcomes desired.

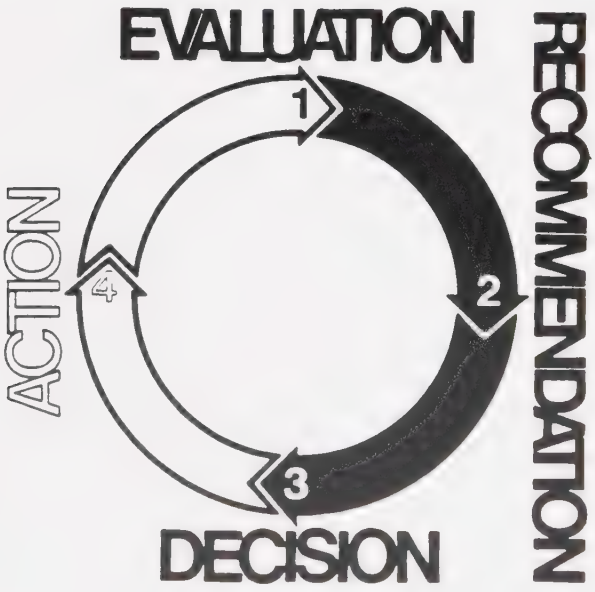
Directions point the way into our future. However, such statements are usually not specific enough to prescribe what actions need to be taken. It is necessary for us to explore a direction until it is possible to indicate desired outcomes which are measurable and achievable. Thus, goals are explicit refinements of the directions.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

Goal development results in **decisions** (step three of the power cycle) about specific outcomes which the congregation will seek through its plan of action. However, in moving from selected directions to specific goals, the **evaluation**, **recommendation**, and **decision** steps are involved.

All selected directions are evaluated. Their meanings and implications are explored. The question is asked about each direction: "What evidence would indicate to us that we are making progress in work on this direction?" Based on this evaluation, alternative goal statements are formulated, compared and contrasted (recommendation). Then decisions are made about which goals a plan of action will be developed to achieve.



This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance to leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are four **designs** in this section requiring from 50 minutes to 3 hours.

2. If Design One or Design Two from the **direction selection** component was used and Idea Worksheets were filled out, the information from those worksheets will have to be compiled and prepared for use by the small groups during this component.

3. As always, the size of the group will affect the actual **design** and time allotments. Give careful consideration to this prior to the meeting.

4. Copies of the following materials are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B* for ordering information.

   a. Guidelines for Goal Development (B-6:5) (Designs One and Two)
   b. Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) (Design One)
   c. Example of Completed Goal Development Worksheet (B-6:13)(Design Three)
   d. Goal Development Worksheet (B-6:15) (Design Three)

5. Discover ways to communicate with the congregation about the results of work on this component. Everyone should have opportunity to know the **goals** which have been developed.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT design 1

goals and ideas

Purpose: To translate priority **directions** into **goal** statements.

Setting: This activity continues the work of a group which has developed and selected priority **directions.** Thus, it could appropriately follow any of the **designs** in the **direction selection** component. If this **design** is used following Design One or Design Two in the **direction selection** component, the optional step described in those **designs** should be eliminated. It becomes an option in this **design.** In this activity participants **develop goals** which they can work on further or which can be recommended to another group (such as the **formal leadership**) for development of the **plan of action**.

If this activity immediately follows a **direction selection** activity begin with step 1 below. If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with **worship** and **community building.** If this is done additional time will be necessary.

Materials Needed: List of the priority **directions** selected in the previous activity
Guidelines for Goal Development (B-6:5) for each small group
Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) for each participant (if optional step 5 is used)
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 25 minutes to 1 hour 35 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader introduces this activity and shares its place and purpose in the **planning** process. A leader instructs the group on the characteristics of a good **goal** statement. (Use Guidelines for Goal Development sheet (B-6:5).
2.	20	The total group moves into small groups. Each small group is given one of the priority **directions.** The task in the next step is to develop at least two but not more than five **goal** statements. To prepare for this each small group discusses the following questions in relation to its **direction:** — What is already being done in our church which is related to this **direction**? — How would we know when progress was being made on this **direction**? What

would be the signs, evidence, or specific results to which we could point?
— What persons or groups would we want to involve, reach, or minister to in our work on this **direction**? What would be the benefits to our church, community, or world if significant achievement were made on this **direction**?
— How does the Christian Gospel speak to this **direction**? What is to be valued in our work on this **direction** and in the outcomes we intend to achieve?

3. 25 Based on the discussion and using the Guidelines for Goal Development, each small group develops 2 to 5 **goal** statements. The groups should be reminded that **goals** describe outcomes or results rather than how they are accomplished. Strategies for achieving the **goals** will be developed later using **plan of action** activities. If the small group has **plan of action** ideas, these should be recorded on a separate sheet of newsprint. A group may wish to write a background statement for each **goal** it develops which summarizes some of the important points from the discussion.

4. 25 The total group is reconvened and each small group writes its **goal** statements on newsprint. The total group raises questions and concerns to help clarify each statement.

5. Optional Step This step will be especially useful in situations in which the group gathered for this activity will not meet again. The ideas surfaced in this step are to be passed on to those responsible for the **plan of action.**

10 Each person is given an Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) which lists all the **congregational units**, and writes down ideas for each **unit** to consider for the different **directions** chosen. Anyone willing to work on any of the **directions** or suggested ideas should indicate this by placing a check in column B of the worksheet.

6. 5 A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance to the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT design 2

with congregational units

Purpose: To translate priority **directions** into **goal** statements.

Setting: This **design** structures the work of the **formal leadership** (or similar group) of a congregation which is receiving **directions,** and has as its task **goal development** for each **congregational unit.**

In a small congregation there may not be a lot of different committees or organizations which have their own programs. In this case, the **formal leadership** may be a small group which does **planning** for the entire congregation. If so, adapt the instructions which follow to make them appropriate for one group rather than several.

If this activity immediately follows a **direction selection** activity begin with step 1 below. If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with **worship** and **community building.** If this is done additional time will be necessary.

Materials Needed: List of the priority **directions** selected in the previous activity for each work group
Guidelines for Goal Development (B-6:5) for each small group
Information from the Idea Worksheet (B-5:7) developed in the **direction selection** component, if this was done
Newsprint and markers

Time: 3 hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	2	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	5	Participants are divided into work groups based on leadership and/or membership in a **congregational unit** (e.g., trustees, committee on Christian education, women's organization, etc.). (If a person is a member of more than one group, that person should participate in only one group during this activity. Possible questions to ask in making the decision about which group a person

should be a part of: In terms of program development, which group has the greatest need for this person? Do the **directions** selected make participation in a particular group more vital? With which group does the individual most closely identify? Which group will have fewer members present?)

3. 15 Each group is given a list of priority **directions** previously developed. Each group reviews the list and decides whether each **direction** is primary (the group has major responsibility in this area), secondary (the group has interest or concern for the **direction,** but does not have primary responsibility for it), or not at all related to its concerns or responsibilities.

4. 15 The total group is reconvened and each work group reports its assignment of each **direction** into the three categories in step 3. Brief group discussion may result in some revisions. It is acceptable for more than one **congregational unit** to work on the same **direction.** If there are **directions** which no group identifies as primary or secondary, the total group needs to decide how it should be handled or to whom that **direction** should be assigned. The possibility of creating a special task force to work on such a **direction** should be considered.

5. 10 A leader informs the group about the characteristics of a good **goal** statement (using Guidelines for Goal Development) and how the work groups are to proceed during the next steps.

6. 30 Each work group reviews the work of its **congregational unit** and writes **goal** statements which reflect its present and immediate past activity.

(This step is intended to accomplish two purposes. One, it will help the group review all its work. Two, it will give the group practice in writing **goal** statements. In situations in which a group already has clear **goal** statements this time can be used to review and revise them, if needed.)

7. 10 Break

8. 15 Each group assigns each of its present **goals** to one of the primary or secondary **directions** selected in steps 2 and 3 above. Next, the group evaluates how well it is working on its **directions** based on its present **goals.** The group then identifies the **directions,** beginning with primary ones, which need additional attention.

9. 40 Each group develops additional **goals** to help the church move in the **directions** which have been identified and selected. This can be done by brainstorming, in relationship to each **direction,** responses to the question: "At a congregational meeting one year from now what would we like to be able to report we had accomplished during the year?" The focus should be on results, outcomes, and evidence rather than on how to accomplish them. The how-to will be developed later. If how-to ideas are suggested they should be listed on a separate sheet of newsprint for later reference.

If Idea Sheets were used in the **direction selection** component, the relevant information for each **congregational unit** is introduced to the work group at this

		point. **Goals,** based on the brainstorming and Idea Sheets, are written on newsprint.
10.	10	Break
11.	25	The total group is reconvened and each work group displays its present **goals** and its new projected **goals** on newsprint. The total group raises questions and concerns to help clarify each **goal** statement. If there are similarities or duplications between **goals** of **congregational units,** one group can accept the responsibility for a **goal,** or plans can be made for groups to work together in developing a **plan of action.**
12.	3	A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance in the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next. If this concludes the day's work, a leader may close the meeting by **evaluation** of the meeting, **worship,** prayer, etc.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT design 3

evidencing the future

Purpose: To translate priority **directions** into **goal** statements.

Setting: This **design** structures the work of small groups whose task is to develop **goal** statements based on the **directions** selected in the previous component. If the group numbers no more than 8 persons, the work can be done in one group. If more than 8 are present, most of the work will be done in small groups.

If this activity immediately follows a **direction selection** activity begin with step 1 below. If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with **worship** and **community building.** If this is done additional time will be necessary.

Materials Needed: List of the priority **directions** selected in the previous activity for each work group
Information from the Idea Sheets developed in the **direction selection** component, if this was done
Example of Completed Goal Development Worksheet (B-6:13) for each person or placed on newsprint for all to see
Goal Development Worksheet (B-6:15) for each person or on newsprint for each small group
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour 5 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
2.	15	A leader introduces the Example of Completed Goal Development Worksheet (B-6:13) and explains its use. If the leader feels that the group needs more experience or skill, one of the **directions** could be selected and worked through with the total group.
3.	30-40	Small groups are formed and the priority **directions** are assigned to the groups.

Each group should work on no more than two **directions.** The information related to each **direction** from the Idea Worksheet, if they were used, is given to the appropriate small group.

4. 15-20 The total group is reconvened and each small group reports its **goal** statement(s) and interpretive paragraph for clarification and acceptance.

5. 2 A leader summarizes this activity, indicates its importance in the **planning** process, and previews what is to happen next.

example of completed goal development worksheet

Step 1. Write in the direction assigned to the group.
In the next year it is important for our congregation to develop more meaningful worship.

Step 2. List in the column below all factors related to or which influence the direction.	**Step 3. Review each entry in the left-hand column and list ways to maintain or develop each one.**
1. Preaching	1. Variety of subjects with some continuity 1. Feedback to preacher 1. Protect study time of preacher
2. Music	2. Sing more familiar hymns 2. Learn new hymns 2. Increase number of persons in choir
3. Order of worship	3. Special services which alter the format from time to time 3. Variety within the present order 3. A sermon to explain the order of worship
4. Attendance	4. Increase church attendance by 5%
5. Physical setting	5. Paint the sanctuary 5. Make some attractive banners
6. Times of worship	6. Check for interest in earlier service during the summer 6. Occasional services at different times
7. Leadership	7. Have occasional outside preachers or people from within the congregation preach 7. Have more congregational participation throughout the service.

Step 4. Review the two columns above and consider whether the direction needs to be revised or adjusted in any way. If so, rewrite it here. It not, rewrite the direction from step 1 above in this space.

Develop more meaningful worship.

Step 5. Create a goal statement which incorporates the most important items from the columns above. Complete the sentence:

Achievement of the direction noted above will be evidenced by . . .
programs/activities which will increase attendance by 5%, a variety of preaching and music which meets the needs of different persons in the congregation, special services four times during the year, and one project to improve the beauty of the sanctuary.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT design 4

practice and doing

Purpose: To translate priority **directions** into **goals**.

Setting: This **design** can be used by a group of ten persons. If there are more than ten, divide into groups of at least 5 but no more than 8. Groups will be developing no more than two **goals** for each **direction.** This **design** will be particularly useful to a small church or a committee where the persons engaged in **goal** development will also be developing a related **plan of action** and will be responsible for implementing it.

Materials Needed: The **directions** decided upon in the previous activity
Newsprint and markers
Optional Goal Statements Worksheet (B-6:19) for each participant

Time: 50 minutes; more if only one group

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader introduces this activity and the place it has in the **planning** process.
2.	2	A leader introduces the qualities of a good **goal** statement from Guidelines for Goal Development (B-6:5). These are summarized and placed on newsprint for all to see (as found in the criteria section on the Optional Goal Statement Sheet (B-6:19).
3.	10	A leader introduces optional **goal** statements and leads the total group in critiquing the four **goal** options and in the practice of writing a **goal** statement.
4.	3	Groups are formed by individuals choosing the **direction** in which they have the greatest interest. Attempt to keep multiple groups similar in size. If there is only one group, the following steps are repeated for each **direction.**

5.	25	A leader asks each group to develop four **goal** statements and to choose two of them as the most useful. The leader circulates among the groups and helps by clarifying the process as needed. The two **goal** statements are placed on newsprint.
6.	10	A spokesperson for each group shares the group's **goal** statements and asks the entire group about their comfort with the statements. When all **goals** have been shared, the leader announces that these **goal** statements will guide the next step which develops **plans of action.**

optional goal statements worksheet

What follows are a **direction** statement and a series of possible **goal** statements. Some of them are better than others. By critiquing the **goal** statements based on Guidelines for Goal Development (B-6:5) people can get a better feel for **goal** development.

Direction: During the next year it will be important for us to increase our mission to the large number of single elderly people living in our area.

Possible Goals:

1. Have a youth retreat on church vocations by August of this year which involves at least three-quarters of our church youth.

2. Reserve the first five church pews for the elderly.

3. By September 1, a team of visitors will have visited in the homes of at least 25 single elderly people living in our area to express the love and concern of the church and to discover their needs and to develop programs to meet them.

4. Be more sensitive.

Based on the following criteria,which of the four above are the better **goal** statements and how could be they improved?

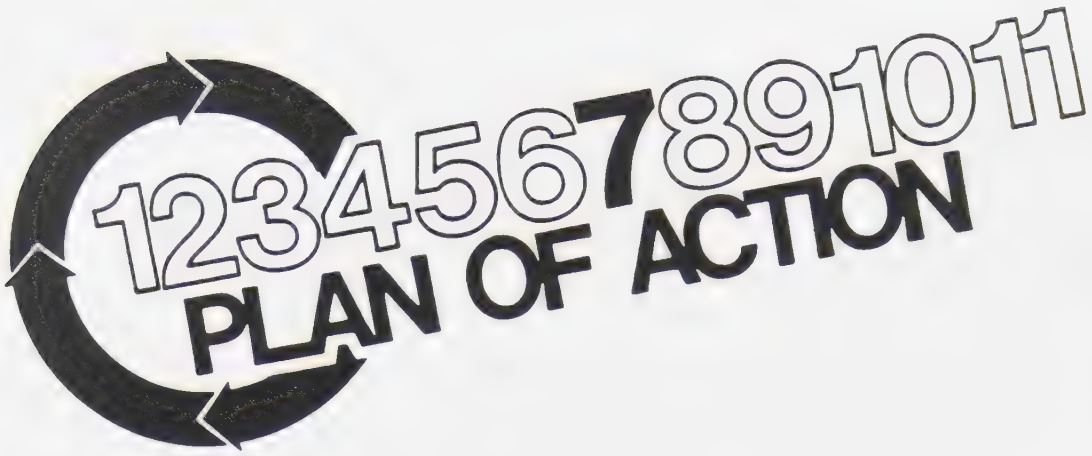
Criteria

- Specific; can measure an end result and achievement along the way
- Has a target date for completion
- Anyone can understand it
- Realistic and achievable
- Related to the **direction** and helps accomplish it
- Is worth doing
- Reflects our understanding of what God wants

Practice by writing a **goal** statement based on the following **direction:**

Direction: During this next year we will be more concerned with the need of our church to relate to the large number of tourists who vacation in our area.

Possible Goals:



Building a map of the programs and activities which will help the church move in the desired directions, achieve its goals, and permit the organization to accomplish them.

In order to make progress in the directions chosen by our congregation and achieve our goals, helpful programs and activities need to be organized and implemented. This takes us into the very detailed questions of who will do what by when. The plan of action pictures the territory to be covered to get from where the church is now to where it wants to be at a specific point in the future.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

The plan of action moves the church through all four steps of the power cycle in sequence. Planners **evaluate** all work that has been done in components 1-6 and review the materials produced. Then they develop as many alternative programs/activities (**recommendation**) as possible which will help the church reach its goals. Next they choose (**decision**) from among the alternatives those programs/activities which they will seek to implement. Finally persons are delegated responsibility for the programs/activities and begin work on them (**action**).

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance for leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are four **designs** in this section requiring from 2 hours to 5 hours 20 minutes to complete.

2. Careful attention needs to be given to which **design** was used in the previous component (**goal development**) and how a smooth transition is to be made to the **design** selected in this component. For example, Design One in this component most easily follows Design One in the **goal development** component. Likewise, Design Two in this component most easily follows Design Two in the **goal development** component. Designs Three and Four in this component will easily follow any of the **designs** in the **goal development** component.

3. Design Three is the simplest of the **designs** in this component. It is particularly usable by a small church or one which wants to develop no more than 2 or 3 **goals** into a **plan of action.**

4. If the Idea Worksheet was used in the **direction selection** or **goal development** components, the information from these worksheets will need to be compiled and prepared for use by the participants in this component.

5. These **designs** are intended not only to facilitate **planning** in the immediate present, but to teach persons the skill of developing a **plan of action** which will pay dividends in the life of the congregation in the future.

6. It is in the development of a **plan of action** that the issue of resources arises. Resources include materials; information; the experience, knowledge, skill, and time of persons; dollars; facilities; equipment. Some of the needed resources will be available within your congregation. But do not neglect to look beyond your congregation for additional resources. The first place to turn is to your association or conference office which devotes major effort to providing a variety of resources for local churches. Increasingly, in addition to resource materials, conferences have trained resource persons to help local churches with programs in such areas as Christian education, evangelism, stewardship, youth ministry, mission and outreach, etc. *The Desk Calendar and Plan Book of the United Church of Christ* contains information about resources. Order from Stewardship Council, 1400 North Seventh Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63106.

7. Copies of the following materials are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B*.
   a. Program/Activity Planning Sheet (B-7:19) (Designs One and Two)
   b. Planning Flow Chart (B-7:21) (Designs One and Two)
   c. Master Plan Flow Chart (B-7:23) (Designs One, Two and Four)
   d. Plan of Action Worksheet Instructions (B-7:15) (Design Four)
   e. Plan of Action Worksheet (B-7:17) (Design Four)

8. Create ways to keep the congregation informed about various programs and activities which have been planned. Consider periodic progress reports which could be made through the church newsletter, by means of a special insert in the Sunday worship bulletin, or by means of a brief report during Sunday worship, etc.

PLAN OF ACTION

design 1

with formal leadership

Purpose: To develop a **plan of action** for the **goals** of the congregation and for the **formal leadership** of the congregation to learn this skill.

Setting: This **design** structures the work of the **formal leadership** (or similar group) of the congregation which is receiving **directions** and **goals,** and has as its task development of a **plan of action** for each **congregational unit** .

It may not be possible for a **congregational unit** to develop a **plan of action** for each of its **goals** within the time suggestions of this **design.** Therefore, these persons should learn this skill and establish other times to complete the work. Steps 1-9 result in a **plan of action** for one **goal.** Steps 10-12 identify for the remainder of the **goals** the time when the **plan of action** will be developed.

If this activity immediately follows a **goal development** activity begin with step 1 below. If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with a **worship** experience and a **community building** activity, and add additional time to the **design** for these.

Materials Needed: Information surfaced from the Idea Worksheets if these were used in **direction selection** or **goal development** components
Copies of the following for each work group:
Directions and **goals** from previous activities
Program/Activity Planning Sheet (B-7:19)
Planning Flow Chart (B-7:21)
One Master Plan Flow Chart (B-7:23) displayed on newsprint
Newsprint and markers

Time: 4 hours to 4 hours 15 minutes (This includes breaks. If it is necessary to include a meal, additional time needs to be added to the **design**.)

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	15	A leader introduces this activity, shares its place and purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.

The previous work which has been done is introduced. **Directions** and **goals** already developed are reviewed.

2. 5 Participants are divided into work groups based on leadership and/or membership in a **congregational unit** (e.g., trustees, committee on Christian education, women's organization, etc.)

If a person is a member of more than one group, that person should participate in only one group during this activity. Possible questions to ask in making the decision about which group a person should be a part of:

— In terms of program development, which group has the greatest need for this person?
— Do the **directions** selected make participation in a particular group more vital?
— With which group does the individual most closely identify?
— Which group will have fewer members present?

3. 25 Each group is given a list of priority **directions** of the congregation and **goals** previously developed. Each group reviews the list and decides for each **direction** whether it is primary, secondary, or not at all related to its concerns and responsibilities. Each group evaluates its present programs in light of the new **directions** and **goals.**

Then, for each primary and secondary **direction,** it selects all of the **goals** which it would be willing to develop a **plan of action** to help achieve.

4. 20 The total group is reconvened and each work group reports how it assigned each **direction** in the three categories in step 3. It reports which of its present programs is addressing the **directions** and **goals.** It also indicates which **goal** or **goals** it is willing to work on within each of its primary and secondary **directions.** Discussion may result in some revisions.

It is acceptable for more than one **congregational unit** to work on the same **direction** or **goal.** However, if more than one **congregational unit** is assigned a **direction** or **goal,** plans should be made for those groups to be in communication with one another during the remainder of this **design** so that duplicate or similar **plans of action** are not created.

5. 10 Break

6. 25 The work groups are reconvened. Each group selects one of its primary **goals** and brainstorms as many ways as possible to achieve the **goal.** If the Idea Worksheets were used in the **direction selection** or **goal development** components, the relevant information is introduced and reviewed at this time.

The work group decides among all the possible ways to achieve the **goal** one or more it will develop into a **plan of action.** (If possible one of the **planning** leaders should be available to each group to help with questions or problems.)

7. 35 Each group has a Program/Activity Planning Sheet (B-7:19) and is instructed in its use.

Using the Program/Activity Planning Sheet each group develops one program/activity as follows:

a. Develop a background statement for the program/activity which describes the main elements, who it is for, what results are desired, why it is important, how it relates to the **goal,** when it will be completed.
b. List all the things which need to be done.
c. List all the resources which will be needed such as materials, equipment, facilities, personnel, finances.
d. Arrange the steps in sequence, who will be responsible for what, when the step will be completed, and how the resources will be acquired.

(If possible, one of the **planning** leaders should be available for each group to help with questions or problems.)

8. 10 Break

9. 15 The total group is reconvened and a leader dialogues with the groups about the work done in steps 6 and 7. The purpose of this step is to help the groups sharpen their skill in developing a **plan of action.** This is a time for answering questions and clarifying procedures.

10. 10 A leader introduces the Planning Flow Chart (B-7:21) and demonstrates its use by placing several of the programs/activities which the work groups have developed on it. The current month is placed in the first of the 12 columns on the flow chart with subsequent months inserted thereafter.

S indicates the time when the **congregational unit** will begin to develop its **plan of action.** (For the program/activity planned on this day the **S** should be placed in the box for the current month.)
(**S** = planning starts)

U indicates when the first step in the sequence of steps listed on the Program/Activity Planning Sheet is to be taken. The letter **U** should be placed in the box for the month this will occur.
(**U** = program/activity underway)

A indicates when **assessment** of program/activity will occur.
(**A** = assessment)

C indicates the anticipated date when the program/activity will be completed.
(**C** = complete)

11. 30-45 Each work group is reconvened and repeats step 6 above for each of its primary and secondary **goals,** both new and ongoing. It then places each proposed program/activity on the Planning Flow Chart.

(It should be noted that in this step only the major way in which a **goal** is going to be worked on is identified. The detailed development of each **plan of action** is scheduled for a later time and indicated on the Planning Flow Chart by the letter **S.**)

When a group has completed its work it is instructed to record its Planning Flow Chart data on the Master Plan Flow Chart which is displayed in a central location.

12.	30	The total group reconvenes to review the Master Plan Flow Chart. If there are instances of duplication of programs/activities, overcrowding of the calendar, or possibilities for cooperation, these should be explored and alternative plans made. If a group indicates the need for additional help when it meets to continue its work, arrangements should be made for that help to be available.
13.	10	An **evaluation** of the meeting is done using a **design** from the **evaluation** component, and an appropriate closure is facilitated by a leader.

PLAN OF ACTION

design 2

from our goals

Purpose: For each **congregational unit** to develop a **plan of action** for each of its **goals** and for the participants to learn this skill.

Setting: This **design** structures the work of a **congregational unit** in developing a **plan of action** for each of its **goals.** It assumes that the **plan of action** is being developed by the same persons who developed the **goals.**

This **design** assumes that work groups from all of the **congregational units** have gathered and are working at the same time. This allows for coordination of the proposed **plans of action** and an overall program schedule for the church (displayed on the Master Plan Flow Chart). The **design** may also be used by a **congregational unit** work group whenever it is engaged in development of a **plan of action.**

It may not be possible within the time suggestions of this **design** for a **congregational unit** to develop a **plan of action** for each of its **goals.** Therefore, these persons should learn this skill and establish other times to complete their work.

If this activity immediately follows a **goal development** activity begin with step 1 below. If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with **worship** and **community building** activities and add the additional time necessary for these to the total time of this **design**

Materials Needed: Information from the Idea Worksheets if they were used in the **direction selection** or **goal selection** component

Copies of the following for each work group:

Directions and **goals** from the previous activities

2 Program/Activity Planning Sheets (B-7:19)

Planning Flow Chart (B-7:21)

1 Master Plan Flow Chart (B-7:23) placed on newsprint

Newsprint and markers

Time: 3 hours 20 minutes to 3 hours 35 minutes (This includes breaks. If it is necessary to include a meal, additional time for that needs to be built into the **design**.)

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process. The Program/Activity Planning Sheet (B-7:19) is introduced and instructions on its use are given. (It would be helpful if a leader outlined a hypothetical Program/Activity Planning Sheet on newsprint.)
2.	5	The total group is divided into the **congregational unit** work groups which have already been formed.
3.	20	Each work group is given a copy of the Program/Activity Planning Sheet and practices using it by recording the information related to one of its present programs/activities on it. (If possible, one of the **planning** leaders should be available to each group to help with questions and problems.)
4.	15	The total group is reconvened and a leader dialogues with the work groups about their work in step 3. The purpose of this activity is to clarify the use of the Program/Activity Planning Sheet and to insure that all groups understand the procedure and are working in a uniform manner.
5.	10	Break
6.	20	The work groups are reconvened. Each work group selects one of its new **goals** formulated in the **goal development** component and brainstorms as many ways as possible to achieve that **goal.** If the Idea Worksheets were used in the **direction selection** component, the relevant information is introduced and reviewed at this time. The work group decides among all the possible ways to achieve the **goal,** the one or more it will develop into a **plan of action.**
7.	35	Each work group has another Program/Activity Planning Sheet. Using that sheet, each group develops one program/activity as follows: a. Develop a background statement for the program/activity which describes the main elements, who it is for, what results are desired, why it is important, how it relates to the **goal,** when it will be completed. b. List all the things which need to be done. c. List all the resources which will be needed such as materials, equipment, facilities, personnel, finances. d. Arrange the steps in sequence, who will be responsible for what, when the step will be completed, and how the resources will be acquired. (If possible, one of the **planning** leaders should be available for each group to help with questions or problems.)

8.	5	Break
9.	10	The total group is reconvened. A leader introduces the Planning Flow Chart and demonstrates its use by placing several of the programs/activities which the work groups have developed on it. The current month is placed in the first of the 12 columns on the flow chart with subsequent months inserted thereafter. **S** indicates the time when the **congregational unit** will begin to develop its **plan of action.** (For the program/activity planned on this day the **S** should be placed in the box for the current month.) (**S** = planning starts) **U** indicates when the first step in the sequence of steps listed on the Program/ Activity Planning Sheet is to be taken. The letter **U** should be placed in the box for the month this will occur. (**U** = program/activity underway) **A** indicates when **assessment** of programs/activities will occur. (**A** = assessment) **C** indicates the anticipated date when the program/activity will be completed. (**C** = complete)
10.	30-45	Each work group is reconvened and repeats step 6 above for each of its primary and secondary **goals**. It then places each proposed program/activity on the Planning Flow Chart (B-7:21). (It should be noted that in this step only the major way in which a **goal** is going to be worked on is identified. The detailed development of each **plan of action** is scheduled for a later time and indicated on the Planning Flow Chart by the letter **S.**) When a group has completed its work. it is instructed to record its Planning Flow Chart data on the Master Plan Flow Chart which is displayed in a central location.
11.	30	The total group reconvenes to review the Master Plan Flow Chart. If there are instances of duplication of programs/activities, overcrowding of the calendar, or possibilities for cooperation, these should be explored and alternative plans made. If a group indicates the need for additional help when it meets to continue its work, arrangements should be made for that help to be available.
12.	10	An **evaluation** of the meeting is done using a **design** from the **evaluation** component, and appropriate closure is facilitated by a leader.

PLAN OF ACTION design 3

for a small church

Purpose: To develop a **plan of action** for the **goals** of the congregation.

Setting: This **design** is particularly suitable for a small church which has the capability of working only on a few **goals** at a time.

It can be done by a group of up to 12 persons. If more persons are participating, divide into small groups for step 5 and then call them together at the conclusion of that step for their reports to the total group.

If this activity immediately follows a **goal development** activity involving the same persons, begin with step 1 below. If the meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with a **worship** experience and a **community building** activity, and add additional time to the **design** for these.

Materials Needed: List of **directions** and **goals** from the previous component
Newsprint and markers

Time: 2 hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	15	A leader introduces this activity, shares its place and purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda. The previous work which has been done is introduced. **Directions** and **goals** already developed are reviewed.
2.	20	Each **goal** is recorded on a separate sheet of newsprint. Using only the upper half of the paper, the group records what the church is already doing to work toward this **goal.**
3.	20	The group is asked to brainstorm additional ways to accomplish each **goal** and these ideas are recorded on the lower half of each newsprint sheet.

4. 10 The group then selects one or two of the new ideas from each newsprint for the church to work on. In making its choices the group needs to be realistic about how much can be done in light of what already is being done.

5. 45 Each of the selected ideas to be developed is placed on a new sheet of newsprint and the following questions about it are answered :

a. By what date will this be achieved and complete?

b. Who will give leadership to each step?

c. What resources will be needed and how will they be secured?

d. Who is to be involved ?

6. 10 An **evaluation** of the meeting is done using a **design** from the **evaluation** component, and appropriate closure is facilitated by a leader.

PLAN OF ACTION design 4

in two parts

Purpose: For each **congregational unit** to develop a **plan of action** for one or more **goals** of the congregation and to develop a coordinated schedule for all the programs.

Setting: This **design** is in two parts and is done in two different settings at two different times.

Part One is done by each **congregational unit**. This can be done by bringing them all together so that they can share their **plans** with one another. Or, each **congregational unit** can complete Part One at its convenience. During Part One each **congregational unit** completes the Plan of Action Worksheet (B-7:17) and selects someone to represent the **unit** in Part Two.

Part Two is a meeting of a **planning group** and the representatives from the **congregational units**. This group will coordinate scheduling to prevent overcrowding of the calendar and will be sensitive to possible overlaps or duplication of efforts.

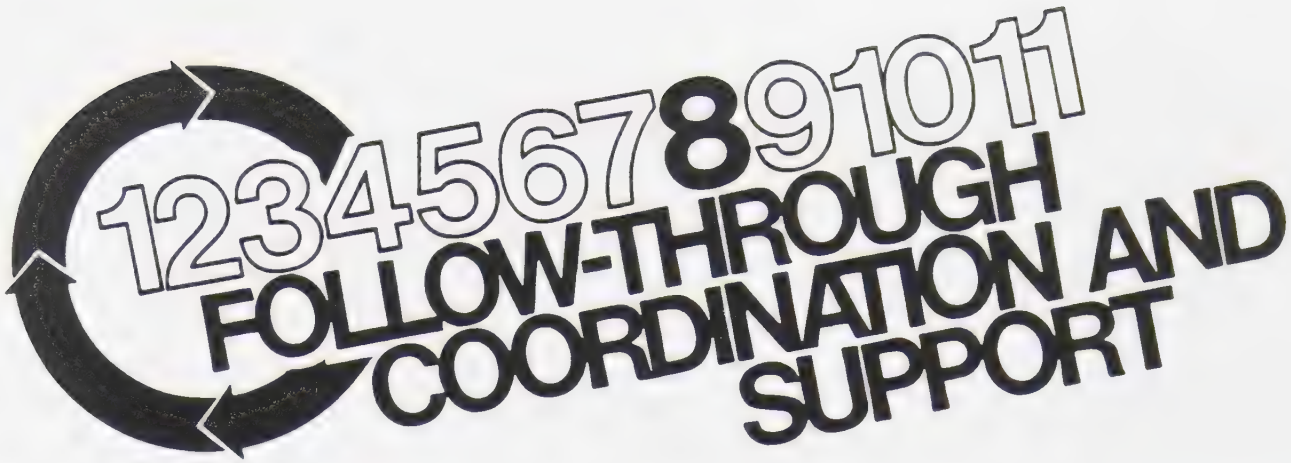
The instructions are written for a single work group. If several work groups are convened at the same time, the introductory and explanatory tasks can be done in the total group before dividing into **congregational units**.

If this meeting begins with this **design,** precede step 1 with a **worship** experience and a **community building** activity, and add additional time to the **design** for these.

Materials Needed: List of the **goals** from the previous component
Plan of Action Worksheet (B-7:17) and instruction sheet (B-7:15) for each person, or the worksheet placed on newsprint
Information from the Idea Worksheets if these were used in the **direction selection** or **goal development** components
Master Plan Flow Chart (B-7:23)
Newsprint and markers
Information from each unit's Plans of Action Worksheets placed on newsprint (for Part Two)

Time: Part One — 2 hours 40 minutes
Part Two — 2 hours to 2 hours 40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
		PART ONE — **Congregational Unit** Meeting
1.	5	A leader introduces this activity, shares its place and purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda. The role of the **planning** coordinating group is explained.
2.	10	The **goals** to be worked on are introduced, and time is provided for persons to clarify their understanding of them.
3.	10	The Plan of Action Worksheet (B-7:17) and instruction sheet (B-7:15) are introduced and their use explained.
4.	120	The group completes a Plan of Action Worksheet for one or more of the **goals.** It schedules breaks or meals as needed.
5.	5	The group is reminded of the role of the **planning** coordinating group and is informed when it will meet. The group selects one of its members to represent it at the meeting of the **planning** coordinating group.
6.	10	An **evaluation** of the meeting is done using a **design** from the **evaluation** component, and appropriate closure is facilitated.
		PART TWO—**Planning Group** Meeting
7.	20	**Worship** and **community building** activities are led.
8.	5	A leader introduces this activity, shares its place and purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.
9.	40-60	A person from each **congregational unit** presents the group's Plan of Action Worksheets displayed on newsprint. Time for clarification is provided.
10.	40-60	The Master Plan Flow Chart (B-7:23) is introduced and the projections from each group are placed on it. The coordinating group reviews projections from an overall point of view. Do some times need to altered? Are there program overlaps that need to be adjusted? Are there ways for two or more groups to work together? The review continues until the representatives from each **congregational unit** are comfortable with the final **plan** and schedule.
11.	10	A leader reviews plans for **follow-through coordination and support**, **assessment**, and **evaluation**. If this group is to be involved in that, dates are set.
12.	5	A leader provides appropriate closure for the meeting.



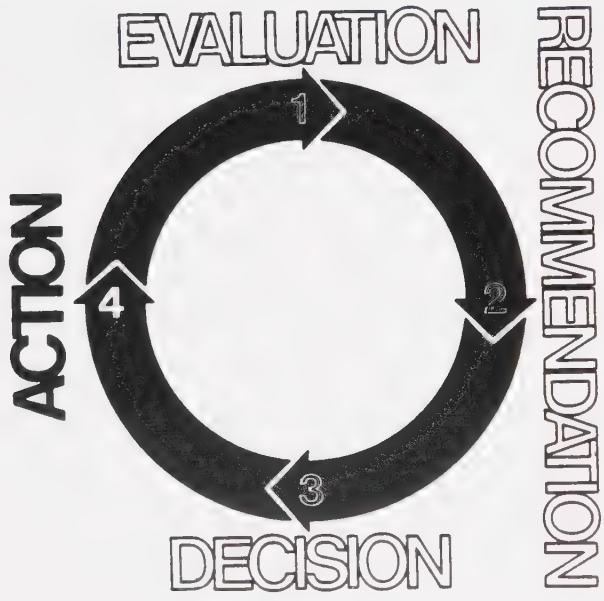
Helping to keep the plan of action on track.

Once the plan of action is set in motion, and we are actively carrying it out, a special group needs to keep in touch with everyone in order to coordinate activity and communication. This makes the most of available resources, avoids duplication of effort, and provides a supportive climate for those working hard to carry out our plan.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, follow-through coordination and support is seen as an activity within step four — **action.** These designs contribute to the effective implementation of the decisions made about programs and activities.



This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance for leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are two **designs** in this component, each taking a different approach to the task. Design One brings together persons involved in the leadership of the programs/activities to perform the function of **coordination** and plan **support** of groups and individuals. Design Two places this responsibility in the hands of a **planning** coordinating group which develops a liaison/support relationship with key leaders.

2. Ways should be found to report regularly to the church **official board** and to the congregation what is happening.

3. At a meeting of skilled church planners it was observed that **follow through** is the weakest element in local church planning because nobody gives it adequate time and attention. To insure the success and achievement of the **planning** process, do not neglect this very important component.

4. Normally, **follow-through coordination and support** meetings are held approximately every two months.

FOLLOW-THROUGH COORDINATION AND SUPPORT design 1

a checkup

Purpose: To facilitate communication among the **congregational units** working on the various programs/activities and to explore ways to **support** the task groups and individuals involved with them.

Setting: This meeting should bring together a representative of each **congregational unit.** This person needs to be familiar with the work being done on each program/activity undertaken by his/her **congregational unit.**

Materials Needed: Master Plan Flow Chart filled in at earlier meeting
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1½ hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader leads the group in a **worship** experience using one of the **designs** from the **worship** component.
2.	10	A leader leads a **community building** activity.
3.	3	A leader introduces this activity and shares its purpose and place in the **planning** process.
4.	40	Each **congregational unit** representative reports on the progess being made on programs/activities undertaken by his/her group. The other participants listen in order to (1) communicate what they have heard to their groups, and (2) pick up possible implications for their programs or possible points of coordination with each group reporting. After each person has presented the progress report, participants are encouraged to ask questions to insure complete understanding. Progress is contrasted with the schedule on the Master Plan Flow Chart and necessary adjustments are made.

5.	20	The total group explores any problems which have arisen in implementing the **plans of action.** Suggestions for supporting and assisting one another are surfaced and explored.
6.	7	A leader summarizes this meeting, previews the next steps in the **planning** process, sets a date for another meeting of this group, if desired, and closes the meeting.

It is recommended that **follow-through coordination and support** meetings be held regularly every month or two.

FOLLOW-THROUGH COORDINATION AND SUPPORT design 2

liaison

Purpose: To facilitate **coordination** of all programs of the congregation, and to provide **support** and encouragement to the task groups and individuals involved in them.

Setting: The **design** calls for a **planning** coordinating group which will be responsible for maintaining communication with all of the program leaders, offer **support** to them, and assist with any problem. This **planning** coordinating function could be carried by the **official board** or by a special task force.

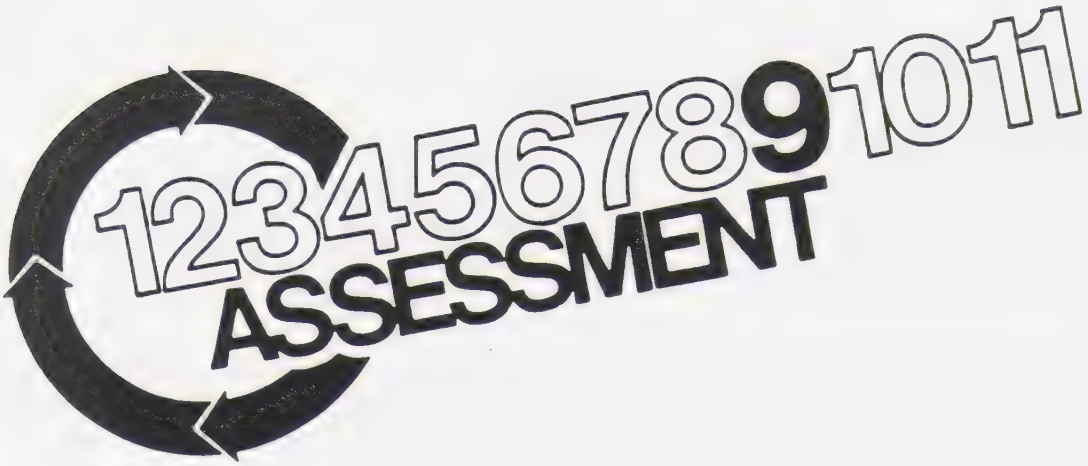
The following **design**, unlike most of the others in this manual, outlines functions and possible activities for the **planning** coordinating group rather than outlining a specific meeting.

STEP	ACTIVITY
1.	The **planning** coordinating group carefully monitors the Master Plan Flow Chart. It identifies the key leaders for the different programs/activities being developed and implemented in the congregation. It assigns one of its members to a liaison/support relationship with each key leader of a program/activity in the congregation.
2.	The liaison makes contact with the assigned program leader during the initial **planning** stage to discover: a. How is it going? b. Is there anything we can do to help? This gives the **planning** coordinating group liaison person a picture of the status of that program/activity and what kind of **support** the leadership needs.
3.	Contact by the liaison person with the program leader can happen at each critical step in the **planning** and implementing process to check how it is going and if any assistance is needed.
4.	The **planning** coordinating group meets regularly to review what's happening. Each liaison person reports on his/her contacts. The group considers what it is

able to do to be helpful, and to develop information and learnings which need to be shared with the program groups.

The group plans ways to report progress regularly on the various programs to the entire congregation and express public thanks to the leaders as programs/activities are completed.

The group is in a key position to summarize learnings at the end of the **planning period** and share them with the congregation.



Providing for mid-course coordination and correction. "How is it going and what adjustments need to be made in the plan of action to better its chances for accomplishment?"

When setting up the original plan of action, we will not be able to take into account all possible complications down the road. Sometimes adjusting the plan is desirable. Assessment needs to be set up so that adjustments to the plan of action can be seen as mid-course corrections rather than failure.

Prior to the end of the planning period some people and groups will have completed much or all of their work on a particular program or activity. Special times are set aside to identify learnings from and make affirmations about their work.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, assessment is an activity that can be seen both in step four — **action** and step one — **evaluation**. When the aim of assessment is facilitating effective work on the programs/activities, it is in the action phase of the power cycle. When the focus is on surfacing learnings and exploring implications for a new cycle of planning, it is a part of evaluation.

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance for leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are three **designs** in this section requiring from 1½ to 3 hours to complete.

2. Deciding who to involve in this activity is an important consideration. Participants should be persons who have firsthand knowledge of what progress is being made on the programs/activities. They should be persons who are in a position to facilitate needed changes if they are identified.

3. Programs and activities will not all be on the same schedule. Thus, at the time of **assessment** meetings some work will be complete, some will be underway, and some will still be projected for the future. Persons associated with programs or activities which have already been completed should be invited to participate and to engage in the **assessment.** Their task will be to identify learnings to inform future planning; for others it will be to make mid-course corrections. Clarification of this will need to be made when instructions for the various steps are given.

4. The scheduling of **assessment** meetings is an important consideration. The various work groups should have ample time to get their programs and activities underway before they are asked to participate in **assessment.** On the other hand, they should not be so far along that mid-course corrections are no longer possible. In a large church with much activity it may be advisable to bring together those persons who are at a similar point in their programming. Normally **assessment** meetings are held approximately every four months.

5. The time suggestions for every step are only estimates. You should use your judgment about how long each step will take and plan the length of your meeting based on this.

6. Copies of the Assessment Checklist Worksheet (B-9:5) and the Assessment Worksheet (B-9:11) are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B*.

ASSESSMENT design 1

changing course

Purpose: To **assess** progress being made on the various programs/activities of the congregation and to make mid-course adjustments in the **plans of action** to insure achievement.

Setting: Knowledgeable persons from the various programs/activities are brought together.

Materials Needed: Master Plan Flow Chart filled in at earlier meeting
An adequate supply of the Assessment Checklist Worksheets (B-9:11)
Assessment Checklist Worksheet on newsprint
Newsprint and markers

Time: 2 hours 15 minutes to 2 hours 35 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	20	A leader leads the group in a **worship** experience and a **community building** activity.
2.	5	A leader introduces this activity, shares its purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.
3.	15	A leader introduces the Assessment Checklist Worksheet (B-9:11) and models its use with a sample produced on newsprint. The explanation should cover the following points: a. Be sure to record the name of the program/activity and the **goal** it is seeking to achieve. b. The left-hand column headed "factors which influence" already lists a number of factors which influence the potential success of the program or activity. The group should identify others and add them to the list. Not every factor will be applicable for every program or activity. c. The second column records the **assessment** by the person or group about how well each factor is being handled. d. The third column provides an explanation of the **assessment** given in column 2.

e. The fourth column is for listing ideas of how to strengthen work on each of the factors if it is needed. This column acknowledges that adjustments sometimes need to be made based on developments which were not or could not be foreseen in the **planning.** It is important not to lose sight of the **goal** which the program or activity is working toward. It will be helpful to refer back to the **goal** when exploring reconsiderations.

f. Finally, the bottom of the worksheet includes "next steps" which grow out of the reconsiderations, if adjustments seem to be called for.

4. 30 Worksheets are distributed and each individual is asked to complete a worksheet for each program or activity for which he/she has responsibility.

5. 10 Break

6. 40-60 The total group is reconvened and each person summarizes his/her worksheet for the entire group. (Use small groups if there are more than 8 persons to report.) The group gives its response to each presenter, including additional ideas to reconsider. Adjustments are made in the Master Plan Flow Chart as needed.

7. 10 A leader facilitates an **evaluation** of the meeting using a **design** from the **evaluation** component.

8. 5 A leader summarizes this meeting, previews next steps in the **planning** process, sets a date for another meeting of this group (if desired), and closes the meeting.

assessment checklist worksheet

program/activity _____	related to goal of _____		
factors which influence	status: 1 = feel good about it 2 = not sure 3 = shaky	why? (brief explanation)	**reconsiderations: What could be reconsidered to strengthen? (Or what could have been done if already completed.) If nothing, indicate that.**
a. funding	a. _____	a.	a.
b. publicity	b. _____	b.	b.
c. materials	c. _____	c.	c.
d. leadership	d. _____	d.	d.
e. transportation	e. _____	e.	e.
f. participants' interest	f. _____	f.	f.
g. invitation	g. _____	g.	g.
h. planning	h. _____	h.	h.
i. scheduling	i. _____	i.	i.
j.	j. _____	j.	j.
k.	k. _____	k.	k.
l.	l. _____	l.	l.
m.	m. _____	m.	m.

next steps (review "reconsiderations") if any:

ASSESSMENT design 2

adjustments

Purpose: To **assess** progress being made on the various programs/activities of the congregation and to make mid-course adjustments in the **plans of action** to insure achievement.

Setting: Knowledgeable persons from the various programs/activities are brought together.

Materials Needed: Master Plan Flow Chart filled in at earlier meeting
Paper and pencil for each participant
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1½ hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	20	A leader leads the group in a **worship** experience and a **community building** activity.
2.	5	A leader introduces this activity. shares its purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.
3.	15	Each person is given a sheet of paper and asked to record the following information (outlined on newsprint by the leader): a. Name of the program activity b. What's going well? (For those activities programs already complete: What went well?) c. What are the problem areas? d. What can be done to overcome the problem? (For those activities/programs already complete: What could have been done?)
4.	25	Each person pairs up with another person and shares his/her individual work. Then they discuss and help one another with: a. Adjustments which can be made to strengthen a program or activity in progress or scheduled to begin.

b. What to report to the total group about progress and adjustments to be made.

5. 20 The total group is reconvened and each person reports. Necessary adjustments are made in the Master Plan Flow Chart.

6. 5 A leader summarizes the meeting, previews next steps in the **planning** process, sets a date for another meeting of this group (if desired), and closes the meeting.

ASSESSMENT design 3

mid-course

Purpose: To make mid-course corrections in the **plans of action** and to begin identifying learnings for future **planning.**

Settings: This meeting brings together the chairpersons from all the programs/activities undertaken by the **congregational units.** They include programs which are (1) in the **planning** stage, (2) underway, and (3) recently completed.

Materials Needed: Assessment Worksheet (B-9:11) for each person
Master Plan Flow Chart filled in at earlier meeting
Newsprint and markers

Time: 3 hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader leads the group in a **worship** experience using one of the **designs** from the **worship** component.
2.	10	A leader leads a brief **community building** activity using a **design** from the **community building** component.
3.	5	A leader introduces this activity, shares its purpose in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.
4.	10	A leader introduces the Assessment Worksheet (B-9:11) and explains its use. A hypothetical model of the worksheet written on newsprint would strengthen the introduction of this piece. (Work through Sections I and II at this point.)
5.	15	Each participant completes Section I and II of the Assessment Worksheet for his/her program/activity. (Section I gathers information which includes the title of the program/activity, the name of the **congregational unit** responsible for it, and the **direction** the

		program/activity is supporting. Section II identifies forces influencing the success of the program/activity.)
6.	10	A leader continues with the hypothetical example focusing on Section III of the Assessment Worksheet. Ask the group to call out ideas without debate which could: a. strengthen the positive forces, b. turn neutral forces into positive forces, c. reverse or neutralize negative forces.
7.	10	Break
8.	45	Form small groups of three persons each. Each person will have approximately 15 minutes to complete Section III of his/her worksheet using the other two persons as resources.
9.	15	Each chairperson completes Section IV and V of the Assessment Worksheet. (Section IV asks the chairperson to determine what changes are, or would have been, necessary to strengthen the potential success of the program/activity. Section V asks for any possible learnings about **planning** and carrying out a program/activity. This is to be kept for future reference for others engaged in **planning**.)
10.	5	Break
11.	25	The total group reconvenes and each chairperson shares the name of his/her program/activity, his/her **evaluation** of its progress, and what changes are being considered to strengthen it (or would have strengthened it if the program/activity has been completed). Changes should be recorded on the Master Plan Flow Chart.
12.	10	A leader facilitates an **evaluation** of the meeting using a **design** from the **evaluation** component.
13.	10	A leader summarizes this meeting, previews next steps in the **planning** process, sets a date for another meeting of this group (if desired), and closes the meeting.

assessment worksheet

I.

program/activity _____ congregational unit _____

direction _____ chairperson _____

goal _____

II. what's happening

working for us	not sure or neutral	against us

III. possible changes

strengthen what is already working for us	get what is neutral to work for us	reverse or neutralize what is negative

IV. changes to be made

changes I believe will increase the potential of this program/activity

V. learnings

some things to keep in mind when planning future program/activities which have been learned while planning/implementing this one

Looking back at what happened, identifying accomplishments, and discovering learnings from the experience that inform the way this local church will move into the future.

At the outset, a church will have stipulated a set period of time in which its plan of action is implemented and completed. At the end of that period of time we look back to evaluate what happened. Some of the original plan really took off; some of the plan just did not happen. Why? These learnings can be helpful in the future planning. Did having the church engage in this kind of planning really help? Have we learned something about planning which will be helpful in the future? Evaluation surfaces accomplishments and the reasons behind them as a way of informing future action.

The evaluation activities are scheduled after completion dates for all or most of the programs/activities have been reached. As broad a cross section of the congregation as possible should be involved in evaluation.

In addition to program evaluation as described above, it can be very useful to evaluate all the individual events and activities which occur during the program period. Thus, designs for meeting evaluation can be found in this component as well as designs for program evaluation.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, **evaluation** both completes and begins the cycle. Evaluation looks at achievements and at learnings which have occurred during the work. But evaluation is never entered into for its own sake. Evaluation always is focused on what we ought to be doing in the future because of what our past experience has been. Thus, evaluation as described here is seen as one form of data gathering (component 4) that informs and influences new directions for the church.

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance for leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are five **designs** in this section requiring from 10 minutes to 3 hours to complete.

2. It should be noted that this section contains two different kinds of **evaluation designs.** Designs One and Two are for meeting **evaluation.** They are brief **designs** of how to engage a group in reflecting upon the positive and negative aspects of a meeting or activity they have just attended. Designs Three, Four, and Five are to be used at or near the conclusion of a **program period** to reflect upon the achievement of what the congregation set out to do, and to decide about future **planning** endeavors.

3. Copies of the Evaluation Checklist (B-10:7) used in Design Two are available in quantity in printed form. See the order form at the beginning of *Section B*.

MEETING EVALUATION design 1

responses

Purpose: To reflect upon what happened during a meeting; to express feelings about the meeting; and to identify ways to make future meetings more effective, productive, fun, or sensitive to persons.

Setting: The total group is reconvened at the conclusion of the work session.

Materials Needed: Newsprint and markers

Time: 10 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	3	A leader asks the group to call out what they liked about the meeting. Responses are recorded on newsprint.
2.	4	A leader asks the group to call out ways the meeting could have been improved. Responses are recorded on newsprint.
3.	3	A leader asks the group to call out how they are feeling right now about the time together.

MEETING EVALUATION design 2

happenings

Purpose: To reflect upon what happened during the meeting; to express feelings about the meeting; and to identify ways to make future meetings more effective, productive, fun, or sensitive to persons.

Setting: The total group is reconvened at the conclusion of the work session.

Materials Needed: Evaluation Checklist (B-10:7)

Time: 12-15 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	Optional Step 3	At the beginning of the meeting, a leader informs the group that a brief **evaluation** of the meeting will be done at the conclusion of the meeting and passes out the Evaluation Checklist (B-10:7) so that all will know what is to be **evaluated**.
2.	8	At the conclusion of the meeting (immediately prior to closure or **worship**) a leader asks individuals to complete the checklist. The checklists are collected.
3.	3	A leader asks for personal sharing: "What happened to you in this meeting? How do you feel about it? What do we have to celebrate?"
4.	1	A leader announces that results from the written **evaluation** will be shared with all participants at the next meeting or by mail.

Leaders may design their own evaluation checklist that asks for the kind of information they want or need to improve their leadership and the quality of meetings.

evaluation checklist

INSTRUCTIONS: **Please circle one word in response to each question. Add any suggestions that will help the leaders plan meetings in the future.**

1. How do you feel about the meeting overall?
   great good so-so waste of time depressed

2. Was the purpose of the meeting clear to you?
   yes fuzzy no

3. How would you describe the leadership of the meeting?
   effective satisfactory disorganized not helpful

4. How would you describe the participation in the meeting by those present?
   everyone contributed most were involved some were left out dominated by few

5. How about the length of the meeting in relation to the task?
   just right we needed more time we should have been done sooner task wasn't worth doing

6. Do you think this meeting will have any affect on the life of the congregation?
   definitely it's a possibility I doubt it probably not

7. What could have made it a better meeting for you?

8. Additional comments, suggestions:

EVALUATION design 3

learnings

Purpose: To **evaluate** the achievement of the **goals** of the congregation at the conclusion of the **program period,** and to identify learnings for future **planning** of the congregation.

Setting: The key to the **design** of the meeting is the participants. An attempt should be made to have as many persons as possible present who were involved in any of the programs/activities during the **program period.** This would include leaders and participants in the programs, all chairpersons of programs/activities, the **official board,** the **formal leadership** of the congregation, the **planning group,** and the **planning facilitators.**

Materials Needed: Master Plan Flow Chart filled in at earlier meeting
Newsprint and markers

Time: 3 hours

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader conducts a **worship** experience using a **design** from the **worship** component.
2.	15	A leader facilitates a **community building** activity using a **design** from the **community building** component.
3.	5	A leader introduces the purpose of this meeting, explains its place in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda of the day.
4.	10	A leader introduces the total group to the Master Plan Flow Chart. An explanation is given of what it represents, how it originally looked, and what changes have been made. Opportunity for questions of clarification is provided.
5.	10	Break
6.	45	The total group is divided into small groups with persons being assigned to groups which will review programs/activities with which they are familiar. Each group is assigned 3-5 programs/activities to review and **evaluate.**

(The groups may have persons who do not have direct familiarity with each program/activity; however, there should be at least one person who does.)

Each small group is asked to consider the following questions in reviewing/ **evaluating** its assigned programs/activities. Each group outlines a report on newsprint.

a. Name and brief description of program/activity (including what it intended to achieve).
b. Was the **goal** achieved?
(Use a scale of 1-5 to measure achievement. 1 = high achievement; 5 = no achievement) See if the group can reach consensus.
c. What helped and what hindered its achievement, and what are the learnings for future program **planning**?

It might be helpful for the leader to illustrate this process using a hypothetical program as an example.

7. 25 The total group is reconvened and each small group makes a report. The reports are recorded on newsprint in the following format.

Program/Activity	Achievement	Learnings
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Members of the total group are asked to call out their feelings about the summary and to add any learnings.

8. 10 Break

9. 25 The small groups reconvene and are asked to develop responses to the following questions:

a. Was the **planning** effort of the past year (or whatever period) useful to our church?
b. What could have strengthened the way we went about it?
c. Is **planning** something we should be doing this coming year? What recommendations do we want to make to the **official board** about this?

10. 20 The total group reconvenes, and reports are given from the small groups. The group looks for trends or common elements in the small group reports which should be kept in mind by those who make decisions about how the church **plans.** These should be recorded on newsprint and turned over to the **planning group** for future use.

11. 5 A leader summarizes the meeting and facilitates closure.

EVALUATION design 4

recommendation

Purpose: To **evaluate** the achievement of the **goals** of the congregation at the conclusion of the **program period,** and to identify learnings for future **planning** of the congregation.

Setting: All persons who have been involved in the **planning** and programs during the **program period** are invited to the meeting.

Materials Needed: Goal Achievement Worksheet (B-10:15) placed on newsprint for each small group
Newsprint and markers

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A leader conducts a **worship** experience.
2.	15	A leader facilitates a **community building** activity.
3.	3	A leader introduces the purpose of this meeting, explains its place in the **planning** process, and previews the agenda.
4.	5	If there are no more than 8 persons, the total group works together. If there are more than 8 persons, small groups of 5-7 are formed. Each group has a large Goal Achievement Worksheet on newsprint. All **goals** which the congregation has been working on during the **program period** have been written in the left-hand column. (If there is more than one group the **goals** are divided equally among the small groups.)
5.	20	In the second column the group records any evidence that there has been achievement of the **goals.**
6.	10	Based on the evidence recorded in column 2, the group decides whether the **goal** has not been met, barely met, partially met, or completely met and places a check in the appropriate box.

7. 20-30 The group then decides whether or not to recommend to the congregation (or **official board**) that a similar **planning** effort be done for the next **program period.** It develops a formal recommendation by completing one of the following sentences:

a. We recommend that the **planning** process not be repeated because . . .

OR

b. We recommend that the **planning** process be repeated if the following conditions are met and/or the following changes made:

If small groups have been meeting they are called together and each shares its work. The total group, based on the work of each small group, decides which recommendation to make.

8. 7 A leader summarizes the meeting and facilitates closure.

MEETING EVALUATION design 5

achievements

Purpose: To **evaluate** the achievement of the **goals** of the congregation.

Setting: This **evaluation** is facilitated by the **planning** leaders and does not require the convening of a special meeting.

An **evaluation** instrument is created (modeled after the sample on the next page) and members of the congregation are asked to complete it. The data is compiled by the **planning** leaders and shared with the appropriate individuals and groups in the congregation.

The **evaluation** instrument may be used in any of the following ways:

a. Mail it to every member of the congregation and ask that it be returned to the church.

b. Plan a time on Sunday morning before, during or following **worship** for persons to complete it.

c. During one month have all of the groups and committees meeting at the church complete it during their meeting.

Materials Needed: Copies of the following **evaluation** instrument. The **planning** leaders will have to enter the congregational **goals** in the left-hand column and the related programs/activities in the second column.

EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are listed the goals of St. John's Church **for 19__. Next to each goal are the programs/activities intended to accomplish it. Based on the information or feeling you have, please rate the degree to which you believe the programs are accomplishing the goals using the following rating scale:**

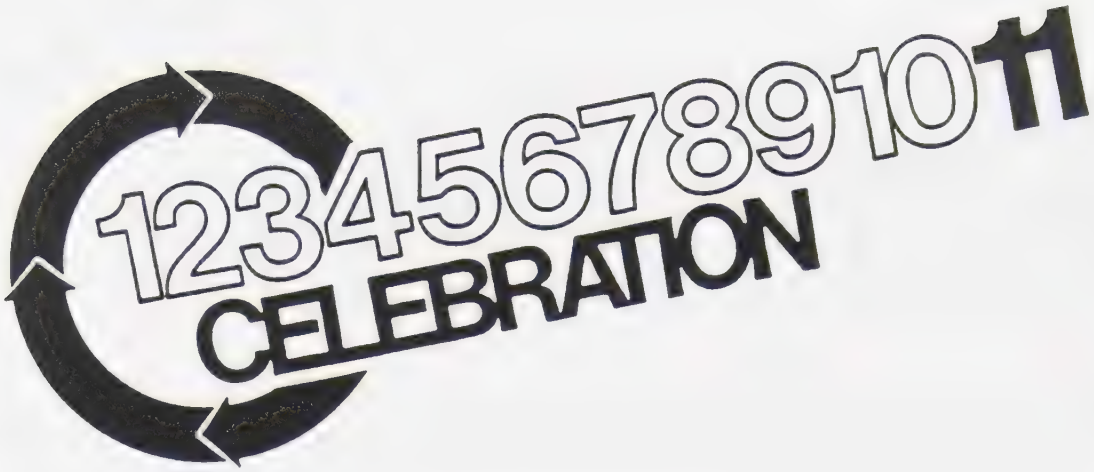
1 = high achievement of goal
2 = moderate achievement of goal
3 = I don't know anything about this one
4 = there does not appear to be achievement
5 = definitely is not achieving goal

SAMPLE

goal	program/activity	rating
1. 50% of our church school teachers participate in one teacher training event during the year.	A. Values Clarification Workshop	_____
	B. Monthly Departmental Teachers' Meetings	_____
	C. Conference Workshop on Teaching Methods	_____
2. New members integrated into the life of the congregation.	A. New Members Classes	_____
	B. Established Organizations	_____
	C. Committees and Task Forces	_____
	D. Sponsor Program	_____
3. Etc.	Etc.	_____

goal achievement worksheet

the congregation's goals	evidence that there has been achievement of the goal	goal not met	goal barely met	goal partially met	goal completely met



Joyfully honoring the meanings of accomplishment and learning.

We quite naturally look for ways to celebrate special moments of life. When a church has worked hard to set itself in important directions and has worked hard to achieve them over a period of time, there will be cause to lift up joyfully the experiences of that time. Those experiences have rich meaning for us—the fun we had; the mistakes we made; how we survived; how we thrived; the difference we feel. To honor these in joyful celebration affirms the nature of the community and gives energy for new efforts.

Some of the following designs can be incorporated into the regular Sunday worship of the congregation. Others can be created as special occasions.

These designs vary in style and duration. You are encouraged to review them and use or revise those which seem most suitable to the needs of the congregation.

power cycle

When the four steps of the power cycle are considered, celebration can best be understood as part of the **evaluation** step. Celebration is a time for lifting up affirmations of identity and meaning in the life of the congregation. It is a time for reflection about what has been, what is, and what we want to be and do in the future in response to the call of God.

This Feedforward sheet is an introduction to the **designs** contained in this component. It includes advice and assistance for leaders as well as feedback from persons who have used the **designs** and, as a result, have learnings, insights, and adaptations to share.

1. There are three **designs** in this section requiring from 1 to 1½ hours to complete.

2. The **designs** contained in this section are here primarily to stimulate your creativity and imagination. You are encouraged to develop and plan **celebrations** that will be most meaningful for your congregation.

3. It will be helpful if persons who are to be responsible for the **celebration** at the end of the **planning period** are recruited early in the **planning** process, so that thay can be alert to events as they unfold. They can be recording ideas and collecting symbols of experiences during the year which can be incorporated into the **celebration.**

CELEBRATION design 1

on sunday morning

Purpose: To **celebrate** the achievements and learnings of the **planning** effort with the congregation during Sunday morning **worship.**

Setting: The **celebration** will be incorporated into the regular Sunday morning worship of the congregation. Planning for the **celebration** will be done by a small group and the pastor.

The following suggestions are for the planning committee as it prepares for the **celebration.**

The planning committee asks:

1. Chairpersons of each program/activity to:
   a. develop a visual display of what happened.
   b. list some of the good things that happened because of that program/activity.

2. The planning leaders and the pastor to develop a sermon which illustrates the **planning** experience.

On **celebration** Sunday:

Displays are set up for people to view prior to or after **worship.** In some instances it might be possible to include them as part of the physical setting for **worship.**

A prayer of thanksgiving includes all the good things which have happened because of the **planning** experience.

The sermon centers on the **planning** experience and its significance for the church. The sermon period could be an opportunity for several members of the congregation to speak about their involvement in and **celebration** of the programs/activities.

A symbol of the **planning** program could be chosen, become a part of the sermon, and be distributed to all members of the congregation as a reminder of the achievements accomplished as a result of the **planning** effort.

If the congregation is anticipating a new **planning** effort, members of the congregation could be given 3x5 cards and asked to write a dream for their church on the card and present that dream as an offering.

CELEBRATION design 2

evening celebration

Purpose: To **celebrate** the achievements and learnings of the **planning** effort within the congregation after the **goals** are completed or nearly completed.

Setting: The **celebration** will center around an evening informal gathering with the option of a dinner or refreshments.

The planning will be done by a small group of persons representing all ages involved in the **planning** process, together with the pastor.

A sub-committee will be appointed to plan the fellowship meal or refreshments.

Materials Needed: Slide projector and screen
Tape player
Hymnals or song sheets
Provisions for meal or refreshments

Time: 1½ hours plus time for the dinner or refreshments

Planning Committee responsibilities:

A. At the very beginning of the **planning** process assign a person or task force the task of taking a series of colored slides and making tape recordings to illustrate the **planning** and the programs.

B. Ask the chairperson of each program or activity to recall the feelings he she experienced while involved in the program and be prepared to share those at the **celebration** along with a brief review of the program.

C. Request individuals and families to reflect on the value of the programs/activities for them and to be prepared to share their reflections at the **celebration.**

D. Appoint someone to preside at the **celebration**.

E. Invite the **planning facilitators** and conference staff person, if they have worked with the congregation in the **planning** program.

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	5	Informal singing of folk songs or hymns designed for all ages.
2.	10	A leader provides a brief introduction and overview of the **planning** process using slides to display the process and show some of the early **planning** meetings.
3.	60	As many of the major programs or activities as possible are reviewed in the following manner: a. The chairperson of the program briefly reviews the program and shares his/her feelings about it. b. The slides and tape recordings related to that program are shown. c. Others share recollections, feelings, anecdotes from the program.
4.	15	Everyone gathers into a circle for expression of appreciation for **planning facilitators** and the many leaders; prayers of thanksgiving; songs of **celebration.**
5.		The fellowship meal and refreshment time may either begin or conclude the evening of **celebration.**

CELEBRATION design 3

festival

Purpose: To **celebrate** the achievements of the **planning** effort and the congregation's life, history, and future promise.

Setting: Everyone in the congregation is invited to a **celebration** of the **planning** effort.

Materials Needed: Song sheets or hymnals
Newsprint and markers
Tunes of songs or hymns

Time: 1 hour 25 minutes

STEP	TIME	ACTIVITY
1.	10	A song fest is held using joyful hymns and folk songs.
2.	10	A leader welcomes everyone and briefly reviews the history of the **planning** effort.
3.	5	A leader invites persons to call out major themes of the **planning** experience. (Themes may have to do with what was experienced, such as "working together," "fellowship," "achievement," "busy-ness"; or with people's feelings, such as "frustrated," "joyful," "tired.")
4.	25	The total group is divided into small groups of 6-8 persons each. Each group is given the tune of a familiar song and one of the themes identified in step 2. Each group is to write one verse of a song based on the assigned theme and to be sung to the assigned tune. (Note: each group may be assigned a different tune, or all the groups may be assigned the same tune. It should be a simple tune and familiar to everyone. Examples: "Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore"; "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"; "If I Had a Hammer"; "Now Thank We All Our God"; "We Shall Overcome," etc.)

5. 10 The total group is reconvened and each group sings its verse. If possible, place the words on newsprint, and have the total group sing all of the new songs. The leaders should keep this a light and fun time.

6. 15 The total group is brought together for serious but joyful sharing with one another. The leader asks the following questions and invites responses from the group. Time for response to each question is given before going to the next one.

We have worked together in this special effort to make our church a more faithful and effective instrument of God in the world

— What do we want to say to one another now?
— What do we want to say to God now?
— What do we think God has said to us in this experience?
— What do we want to say to our church right now?

7. 10 A leader leads the group in a closing **worship** experience.

what is in this section

This section contains the "theory" undergirding church planning. Viewing the church from a human organization point of view, it identifies those dynamics which account for health, vitality, and energy. It also deals with specific issues such as leadership, decision making, and delegation. A rationale for the specific processes incorporated within the manual is provided.

how to use this section

This section is written for planning leaders in the church who are interested in the "why" behind the technology of planning. The materials are suitable for individual study as well as for study and discussion sessions for the planning group.

glossary

planning. Projecting and developing a course of action for accomplishing desired outcomes. Planning is deciding what kind of future is wanted, and then establishing the means to get there.

planning facilitators. Persons who are skilled and trained to assist local churches with the task of organizing and administering congregational planning.

official board. The group within the local church which constitutionally is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the congregation. It is variously called council, consistory, board of deacons, cabinet, etc.

planning group. A task force of the congregation which has responsibility for organizing and facilitating congregational planning. When **planning facilitators** are used, this is the group which coordinates their work.

congregational units. All the organized committees, boards, organizations and task forces of the congregation. They include but are not limited to such groups as the committee on Christian education, stewardship committee, evangelism committee, women's fellowship, men's fellowship, youth fellowship, elders, trustees, etc.

formal leadership. The leaders of the **congregational units** — officers of all the organizations within the congregation and, in some cases, all members of certain boards and task forces.

directions. The major areas in which a congregation intends to work.

goals. Statements describing the specific and measurable outcomes desired related to the **directions** in which the congregation has decided to go.

plan of action. A set of specific steps or activities to be taken in order to achieve the **goals.**

design. An arrangement of elements which structures the use of time in a group. A series of steps are put together so that an activity is created which has a specific beginning and ending and is intended to accomplish a purpose. When several of these structured activity **designs** are put together with breaks, meals, transitions, and other group activities, a meeting **design** is created. When you are engaged in this task you are designing.

planning period. A specific period of time devoted to planning which results in a congregational **plan of action.**

program period. A specific period of time devoted to the implementation of a congregational **plan of action.**

how organizations and leaders function in the church

Just as persons have personalities, so do organizations. We come to know persons, first of all, by their observable behavior. But we soon come to realize that underneath the observed behavior is a complexity of commitments and assumptions, many of which the persons themselves are not consciously aware. Sometimes their behavior seems to contradict their words. Thus, if we are to relate to persons in creative ways it is necessary to take seriously the complex dimensions of their personalities.

Many of the same observations can be made about organizations. They act in certain ways but underneath one suspects there is a complex set of commitments and assumptions operative, many of which are never stated. Sometimes the actions of an organization contradict its stated purpose or position. Thus, to relate to an organization it is necessary to take seriously the complex dimensions of its life.

The theory of organizations which undergirds *Church Planning* is that developed and articulated by the Management Design Group (Management Design, Inc., or MDI) of Cincinnati, Ohio, and known as "provolution."

"Provolution" is translated from a Latin derivative and means "to turn ahead; to turn to the future," i.e., to wish forward to a state of totally new operational norms. The provolution approach, while dealing with present change, conserves and uses energy and creativity by focusing on the development of future possibilities (achievement of hopes, dreams, and goals) for change. This focus affords individuals and organizations the opportunity to manage change which, from a provolutional stance, is both possible and desirable. This is in contrast to a problem-solving approach which dissipates energy and creativity on present problems without the guidance and power of a future vision.

At the heart of this understanding of organizations is the conviction that persons are important and that the church, as an organization, can develop a style of operation in which its members are affirmed and in which personal goals are enhanced, while persons are contributing to the corporate goals.

Healthy organizations are those which have specific goals to which members are committed; those which emphasize and build on the strengths of members rather than calling attention to their weaknesses; those in which individuals are affirmed rather than used.

assumptions

There are some fundamental assumptions the Office for Church Life and Leadership is making which are reflected in *Church Planning* and in its training of persons for work with local churches in planning their future:

1. Life, death and resurrection are basic categories for understanding all life. Every person and organization comes into existence and develops. Every development, however, is bound for decline, yet carries potential for continual renewal and transformation.
2. Life is dynamic, ever in process and, therefore, change is inevitable. An organization can never remain unchanging and any effort to keep it that way will destroy it.
3. The primary thrust of life is toward the fulfillment of itself. Persons want to grow and have their lives count for something. The organizations to which they belong can assist them in this, and the quality of life within the organizations strongly influences their possibilities for growth and fulfillment as persons.
4. Persons are to be valued above all else and are to be enabled to be in charge of their own lives.
5. Life is interrelated, interdependent. Community is necessary for personal growth and fulfillment.
6. There are vast resources of commitment, talent and wisdom in the church which can be tapped and released.
7. Church planning is to be oriented toward future possiblities rather than toward present problems. The local church can capture a vision of future possibilities which provides the motivation and positive direction for the present.
8. The planning facilitator trained with certain skills and made available by the conference can be a significant agent in helping a local church turn corners to new hope, vitality and mission in ways that are not readily open to local leaders alone.

The first assumption above is the fundamental assumption undergirding the theory of organizations reflected in *Church Planning*. It states that life, death, and resurrection are basic categories for understanding all life. Every person and organization comes into existence and develops. Each development, however, is bound for decline, yet carries potential for renewal and transformation. This can be graphically illustrated as follows:

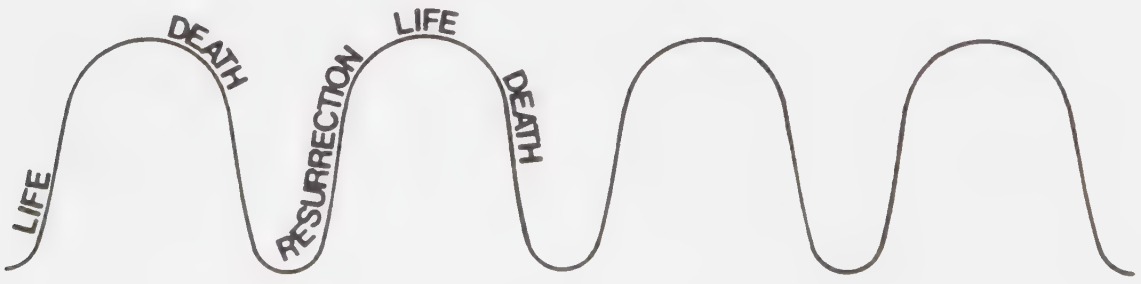


figure 1

While *figure 1* may represent an organization in its entirety, it also may represent any of its organic parts such as its programs, its structure, its relationships, etc., In order to illustrate the complex dynamic of the life, death, resurrection framework graphically, the diagram of an organization could present innumerable lines, each representing one element of the organization as follows:

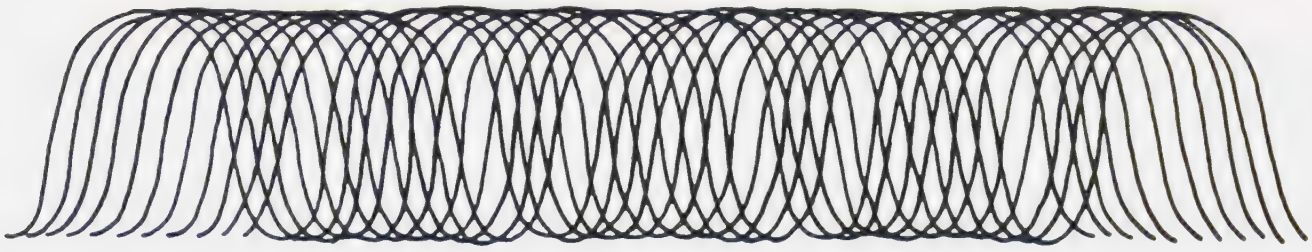


figure 2

To study this process in detail it is helpful to take a single cross section of the diagram and examine the dynamic elements and relationships symbolized there. The following section of the diagram is known as the "provolutionary grid" and represents an organization or one of its organic parts as it develops and experiences change.

The left side of the grid represents the birth and developmental stages in the life of the organization. The right side of the grid represents the process of decline and deterioration which is always encountered in the midst of change. Following is a detailed description of each side of the grid and the implications for the church.

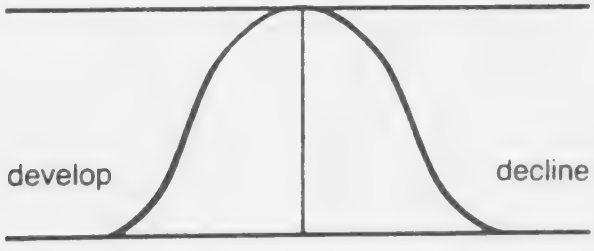


figure 3

myth • belief • norm

The developmental process through which an organization moves can be understood as having three major components which are termed "myth," "belief," and "norm." Although the development is up the left side of the grid from myth to belief to norm (see *figure 4*), these concepts may best be introduced if looked at in reverse order: norm, belief, myth.

The most obvious component of an organization is its norms. An organization's norms include its programs and actions, its structure and relationships, its policies and traditions, its use of budget, its treatment of members, etc. What it does and how it does it are its norms. Norms are the "standard operating procedures" of an organization. Worship services on Sunday morning, the pastor's visits to the sick, all-male official boards, and filling up the rear pews first are norms typical in some local churches.

A second component is an organization's belief. By this is meant its theological formulations, its statements of faith and its creeds, and its stated purpose and goals. It is presumed that an organization's norms grow out of and are expressive of its real beliefs. The importance of worshiping God, ministering to those in need, and winning new members for the church are beliefs which the church holds, and out of which it develops its programs and activities.

A third component has to do with the basic assumptions and values which are at the heart of an organization and from which grow its statements of belief and its goals. The word "myth" is used to describe this basic sense of identity which an organization has. It is its life direction. This use of the word "myth" should not be confused with a common understanding of myth as a fairy tale or unsubstantiated story.

By myth is meant the largely unconscious values and processes by which we organize and define our experience. Myth is that which exists at the feeling level before belief can be articulated; thus it is pre-rational. The "feeling" or "sensing" or assumption one makes that life is meaningful, that persons are important, or that order is better than chaos is reflective of one's myth.

An organization's myth is created and molded by all its experiences. An organization's myth is passed on from generation to generation not only by its ongoing experiences but through the process of retelling its history, its story. Thus, each new generation of church members begins to sense what it means to be Christian through experiencing the Christian community and hearing the "sacred story" told and dramatized in many ways. This precedes their ability to articulate in belief statements what it means to be a Christian or why they feel themselves to be Christian. When the members of an organization sense their identity with one another at a level deeper than intellectual agreement about what they believe, then they are said to be "in touch" with their myth.

A healthy organization is one in which there are consistency and integrity among its myths, its beliefs, and its norms. That is, an organization that is lively, purposeful, and healthy is in touch with its myth, has articulated its purpose and formulated its goals based on that myth (identity), and is engaging in action and relationships which dynamically express its purpose and goals.

An organization in which there is discontinuity, acknowledged or not, among its myth, belief, and norms, will be characterized by confusion, lack of commitment, apathy, conflict, and decline.

For an organization to maintain health and vitality it is necessary for it, again and again, to touch base with its myth; reformulate its statements of belief, purpose, and goal; and engage in new actions and behaviors.

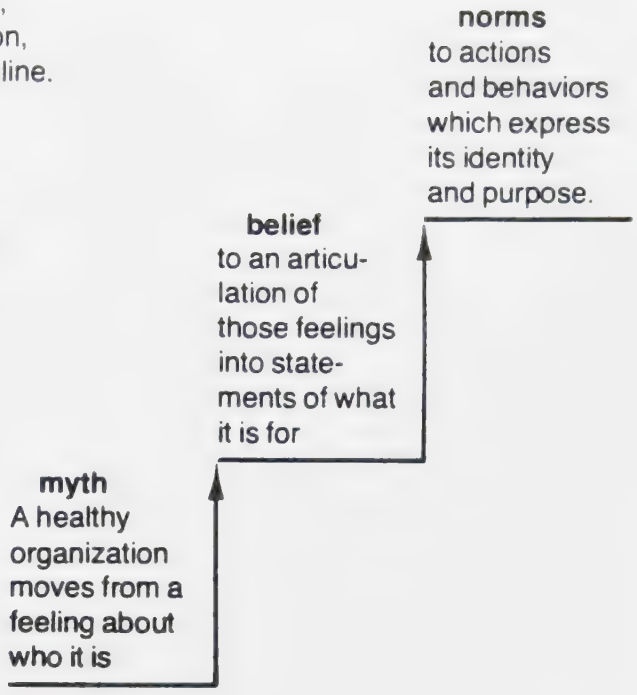

norms
to actions and behaviors which express its identity and purpose.
belief
to an articulation of those feelings into statements of what it is for
myth
A healthy organization moves from a feeling about who it is

figure 4

The Christian Church has a myth which makes it unique — different from every other organization. The Bible and the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ are two expressions of the church's attempt to articulate its myth. The church keeps "in touch" with its myth by retelling its sacred story. One of the primary functions of the Christian community gathered for worship is that the myth may be continually renewed and revitalized. Worship is one of the chief ways for reinforcing the myth and communicating it to new members.

Figure 5 is the left side of the provolutionary grid illustrating the relationship of myth, belief, and norm and some of the characteristics of each:

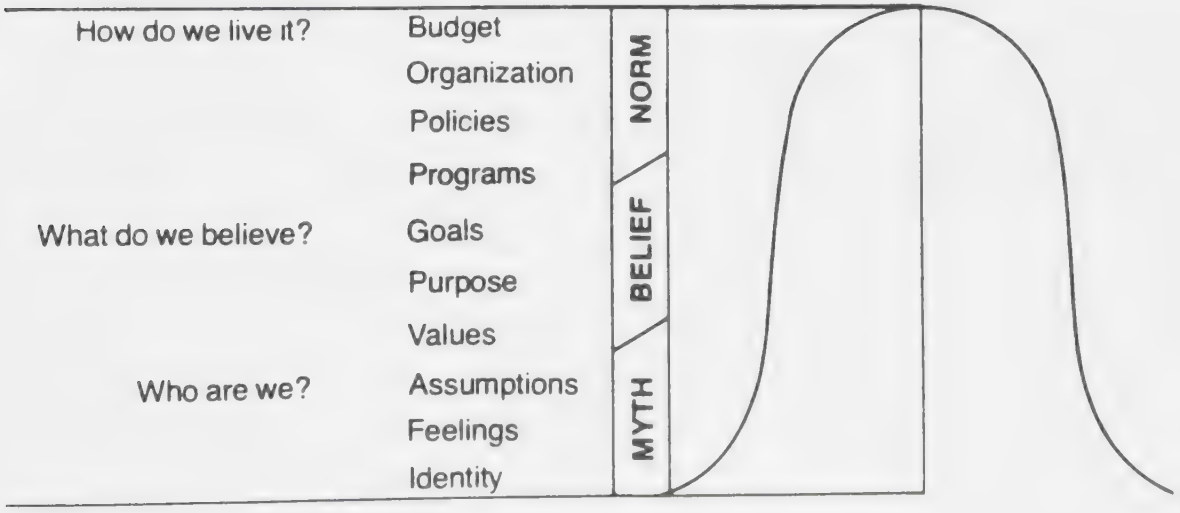


figure 5

trust/doubt

While the left side of the grid, described above, illustrates conceptually the process whereby an organization grows and develops, the right side of the grid illustrates conceptually the process of decline and death which inevitably occurs. Because change is inevitable even the most dynamic organization must give constant attention to the process for maintaining vitality and health. No organization is unchanging. It is both growing and developing, declining and dying. For example, a program achieving a high degree of success one year will not maintain its level of enthusiasm and commitment indefinitely. An organizational system or structure that provides for creative action will eventually lose this ability.

Therefore, while the myth — belief — norm framework helps us understand how an organization builds power and develops trust, we need a similar framework for understanding how power is dissipated and alienation occurs within an organization. The right side of the grid illustrates this downward movement from "anomie" (a state in which the organizational norms are weak or being questioned and challenged) to "ideology" (a state in which the belief statements no longer are expressive of the commitment and convictions of the members) and finally to "alienation" (a state in which members no longer share common values and assumptions about the organization and thus are separated both emotionally and intellectually from the organization and one another).

One indicator of the health of an organization is the level of trust that exists within it. Thus, an indicator of the sickness of an organization is the lack of trust or level of doubt that prevails. There are five levels of doubt which can be identified and illustrated on the right side of the grid.

1. **no doubt**
   When an organization has its myth, belief, and norms lined up and it is functioning smoothly and effectively, it is said to be in a "no doubt" state. Its members are together and there is maximum acceptance and approval of the organization's purpose and performance. Comments about the organization, its programs, and its people are positive. It is characterized by enthusiasm and commitment.

2. **operational doubt**
   Inevitably, however, change begins to occur and potential difficulty arises when one or more of the organization's norms begin to be questioned or challenged. In the early stages it is not usually the "why are we doing this?" which is questioned as much as "how are we doing it?" For example, without questioning the need for Christian education, some church members may begin to question whether or not the Sunday morning church school is the best way to meet this need. This is identified as "operational doubt" because the operational norm is being called into question.

3. **ideological doubt**
   If nothing is done to deal with the concerns of the members who are raising questions about the norms, their questioning will become more serious and their doubts about the organization will increase. They may, for example, begin to question whether awarding attendance pins in the church school really has anything to do with helping their children become better Christians. They begin to ask questions about purpose and goals of the organization and seek rational responses rather than the "party line." This is termed "ideological doubt." Ideology indicates that the only basis for continuing to do what is

being done is that "it's the way we have always done it." In other words, the conviction of belief no longer undergirds the practice.

4. **ethical doubt**
   If the organization remains unresponsive to these concerns, they will intensify. The questioners may move a step further and begin to feel not only is the church school not helping their children, but, in fact, is doing them harm by not treating them as persons. They may get the impression that their children are encouraged to attend, not because of the goal of helping them grow as Christians, but in order to maintain a good attendance record. Persons who reach this point are said to be expressing "ethical doubt." The way the organization treats persons is the key issue.

5. **absolute doubt**
   Finally, if the organization turns a deaf ear to these serious charges, the questioners will probably give up the fight and leave the organization or attempt to subvert it through withholding support or organizing for resistance or disruption.

In our example, the parents may take their children out of the church school and enroll them in another church. When the situation reaches this point, "absolute doubt" has set in, indicating the organization has no common value that holds it together. There is cynicism, lack of trust, and rigidity.

Following is the right side of the provolutionary grid illustrating the relationship among the five levels of doubt:

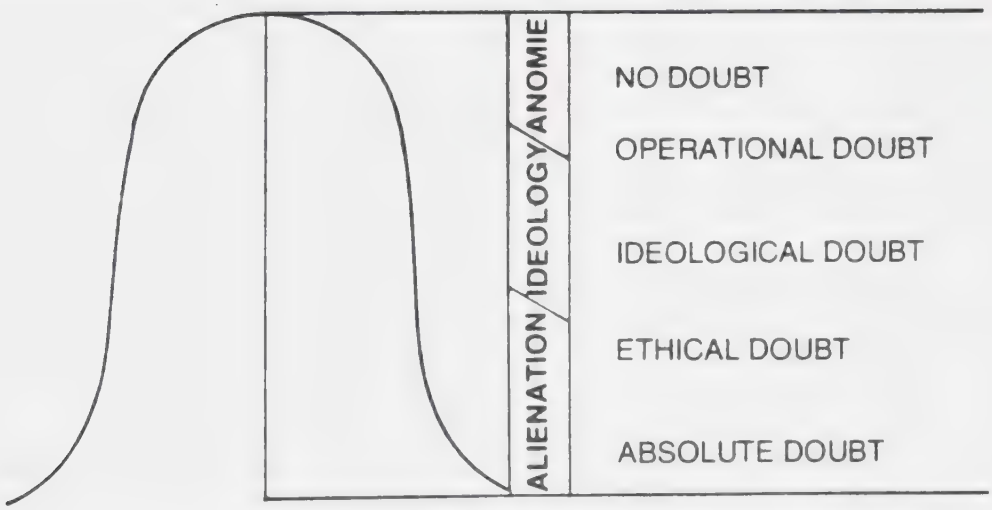


figure 6

the provolutionary grid

There are some observations to be made about the relationship between the left side and the right side of the grid. While the healthy organization is characterized by programs and actions (norms) for which there is commitment, the declining organization is characterized by "anomie," or the absence of commitment to the values, programs, and actions. An organization experiencing this early state of difficulty can creatively respond by moving back to its statement of purpose and its goals and building new programs and structures more appropriate to the new situation. Recognizing that death is inevitable, it can turn loose of the means for accomplishing its goals and be free to seek and attempt new means. Thus, when discontent with the results of the church school arises, the church can move back to its goal of Christian education and explore other alternatives for addressing this need. This is possible if the members are committed to goals rather than to programs. On the other hand, if there is so much investment in the program that the consideration of new program alternatives is met with resistance, the doubt level will increase until the members are again unified around their goals.

The organization which is building power has a clearly defined purpose and stated goals (belief). The declining organization relies on the old cliches and rationalizations which no longer motivate. A church which began having an annual bazaar to raise money to pay off the building debt may be tempted to continue the practice after the debt has been retired. Advocates for the bazaar may talk about its purpose as meeting fellowship needs and providing an opportunity for persons with this interest and talent to serve. To support a money-making project with other rationalizations is an example of the use of ideology. Since this is in the middle of the right side of the grid, clues for dealing with the difficulty can be found by looking at the middle of the left side of the grid. Thus, this is a problem that has to do with belief (purpose and goal). The difficulty can be dealt with creatively by either formulating new goals for the bazaar which are consistent with the goals for the church, or, more appropriately, by taking the goals being used as ideological support for the bazaar (fellowship, service), and exploring alternative programs for meeting them. If the investment in the bazaar is so great that its advocates cannot engage in conversation about congregational goals, then the doubt level will increase until the membership can be unified again around its myth.

An effective organization is based on a solid foundation of members who are together in their values and in the way they meet life and grasp its meaning (myth). The declining organization discovers that at the heart of its existence its members are alienated from one another and from the organization because of fundamental differences around the very essence and values of the organization and its life. At this level the life of the organization can be maintained only if it can get in touch with its myth once again. For example, a congregation may be torn apart in a crisis situation by those who feel deep within themselves that their first loyalty must be to their conscience and their convictions about right and wrong, and those who feel because they owe supreme loyalty to their nation, it is necessary to compromise certain ideals for the sake of national security. Until these two groups can sense their common identity as Christians and

relate to each other on this basis, through the development of agreed upon purpose and goals, the church is threatened with complete disruption and disintegration.

The above illustrations are intended to show the relationship between norm and anomie; belief and ideology; myth and alienation. An analysis of the seriousness of the deteriorating situation in the organization gives leaders some clues about where to begin work. Thus, if an organization is experiencing serious alienation, to attempt modifications at the norm level by making changes in program or structure will be perceived as inappropriate responses.

It should be borne in mind that while change is inevitable, the possibility of resurrection and new life is always present. Programs and structures which no longer are able to carry the goals can be allowed to die as new programs and structures more appropriate to the new situation are created. Goals which no longer enable an organization to give expression to its identity or which have been achieved, can be abandoned for new goals. When an organization is torn by basic differences about its very reason for being, it can get in touch with new dreams and visions which are expressive of its most fundamental sense of identity.

It is possible now to visualize all the foregoing which has been said about the dynamics of organizational life on the following provolutionary grid:

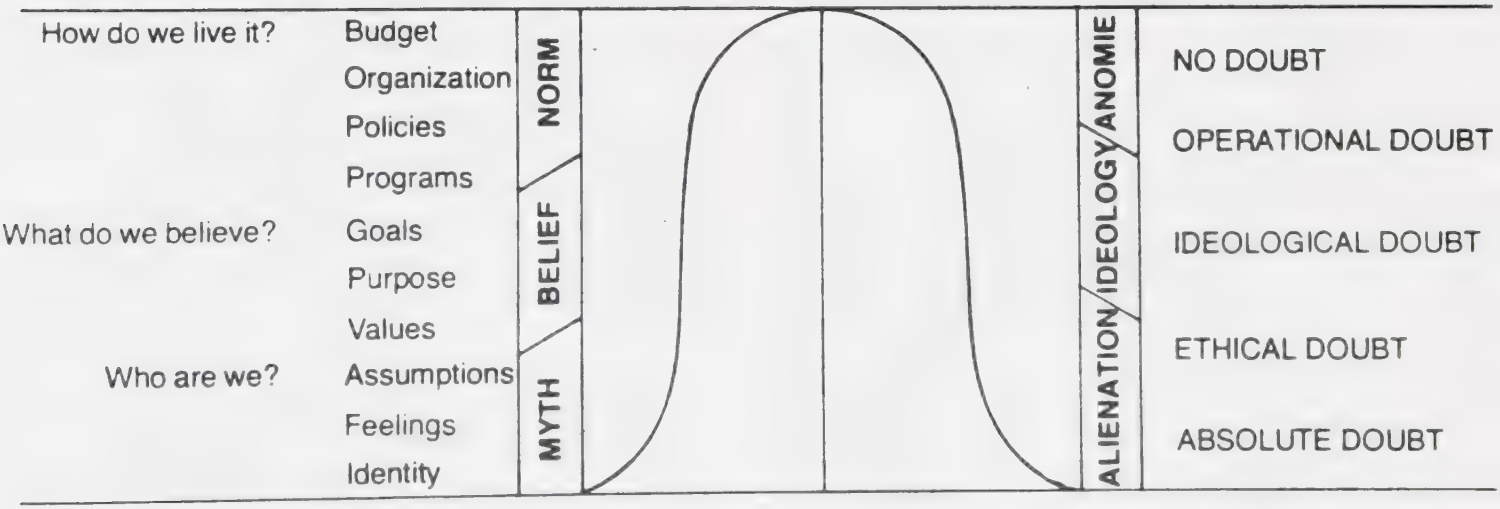


figure 7

building power in an organization

the power cycle*

Power is defined as the ability to act. An organization has a purpose and needs power to act to fulfill this purpose. Some groups, including some congregations, appear to be powerless. That is, they never seem to be able to engage in action which results in achievement. Sometimes such groups are characterized as "all talk, no action."

Power to act can be built in an organization. Such power is the result of fulfilling certain functions within the organization and fulfilling them in proper sequence. The four primary functions and their sequence for building power in an organization are illustrated in the following diagram:

figure 8 the power cycle

As its name suggests, the power cycle is a sequence of steps which are repeated in an organization as it does planning. If this cycle is shortened or any steps are skipped or done without building on one another, the result is power draining rather than power building.

Following are examples of power draining activity in a church:

A church can be so busy doing things that it never stops to ask why or how well it is doing them. People begin to feel very busy but without a sense of direction. Without enthusiasm or understanding of the goal of the activity, people feel "burned out" and are eager to turn over their responsibilities to others. If evaluation takes place and clear directions for the future are determined, there would be purpose to the activity. People could sense they were doing the work because they had evaluated their needs and were moving to achieve them.

A church can move directly from evaluation to action, avoiding the steps of recommendation and decision. This results in a church doing the same things over and over again. No time is given to exploring options. Thus, the only

*This subsection should be read and studied in conjunction with the introduction to the power cycle found at the beginning of *Section A*.

possibilities which occur are those that have been done before. When attention is given to generating alternatives it is possible to discover there are ways other than those which have been previously tried which can help to address the same needs.

A church can get very careless in its decision making. It is not enough to assume that people understand when a decision has been made or what is expected of them as a result. Decisions are not complete until they specify the steps which are to be taken to implement the decision, who has responsibility to do them, by when they are to be done, what resources are available, and from whom additional information and support can be secured.

the experience of power

Power can be experienced in a variety of ways. Even when the power cycle is honored and followed sequentially it may not be a positive experience. One example of this is when the power cycle is used by a few persons as "power over" manipulation of others.

This happens when one person or a small group attempts to fulfill all or most of the power cycle steps. A church official board, for example, could decide what the church's needs are, develop alternatives for the future, decide among the alternatives, and tell other people what to do, or implement the plan themselves. The other people in the life of the church experience this as something which is being done to them. It is power being exercised over them.

Another experience of power in the church, unlike "power over us," is the experience of "power among us." The processes in *Church Planning* lead to the feeling that power is being generated as people work together. The steps in the power cycle are shared in the life of the congregation. Leaders and congregation work together at evaluating, recommending, deciding, and acting. This results in ownership of, and energy for, the work of the church. People sense the power in working together.

However attractive the "power among us" way seems to be, it still falls short of what a church planning experience can be. As a community of faith, we are simply not people who sit down to develop plans as would a business or social organization. We are a faith community. Therefore, as we are able to bring into the planning

experience the dimensions of faithfulness, those dimensions themselves empower the way we think and what we do. The Christian Church has always confessed that it is empowered by God for its work of ministry and mission. Its power does not ultimately come as a result of its own resources, processes, or intentions. In devoting itself to hearing the Gospel and risking its security for the sake of faithfulness the church experiences the power of God working through it to bring health and wholeness to the world. It is only this experience of "power through us" which matters ultimately.

exercising leadership

The most important factor in the effective functioning of a group or organization is its leadership. Every group needs a leader. A leaderless group spins its wheels, dissipates energy and commitment, and often finds itself faced with internal conflict.

Effective organizations are those which engage in action, and experience achievement and success as a result. To do this an organization or group needs to have "power." The function of leadership is to enable a group to develop the power it needs to act.

Healthy organizations build the kind of power which comes from people freely choosing to engage themselves in efforts to achieve a goal which they themselves have freely adopted. This power of persons in an organization is called commitment. The development of this kind of power and commitment in any group of people engaged in a common endeavor depends on several factors:

- The goals of the group, and especially the processes by which goals are developed within the group.
- The ways in which the leader of the group and the members of the group interact.
- The clarity with which a group intentionally moves through the steps of the power cycle.
- The leadership style which is used.
- The clarity with which power is delegated to any individual or group.

In each of these areas the power or commitment of the individuals in the group will be enhanced or drained off by the way people interact. The system and style of interaction are not neutral; they will generate enthusiasm and willingness to contribute, or they will promote apathy and alienation.

Each of the five factors mentioned above can be looked at in greater detail in terms of its implications for leadership.

goals and processes

The processes described in *Section B* of *Church Planning* are designed not only to produce goals and a plan of action for a group, but also to give particular attention to the process by which they are developed. As a group engages in the goal setting process, the leader needs to be sensitive to the two factors commonly identified as "process" and "content." Process has to do with *how* the members of the group work together. Content has to do with *what* the issue or subject under consideration is.

Both content and process leadership roles are necessary and helpful to a group in enabling it to do its work. The content leadership role is one in which the leaders share their knowledge, information, wisdom with the group to help it in formulating its recommendations and making decisions. The pastor is a theological content leader in a congregation, for example. The process leadership role is one in which the leader enables a group to gather the data it needs and work together toward decision and action. The process leader does not participate in the content discussion, but facilitates that discussion.

It is essential for a leader and the group to know which role he/she is fulfilling at any particular time. In most cases it is advantageous for a person to function in only one of the two roles rather than to switch back and forth. If one does change from one role to the other during a meeting, it should be acknowledged that this is being done. For example, a process leader may say to the group which he/she is leading, "I'd like to step out of my role as leader for a minute to share with you some information I have about the subject you are discussing."

In this planning program when planning facilitators are used, they are process leaders and the pastor and lay leaders of the churches with which they work are content leaders.

leader-group relations

Whenever a group meets, the question of "who is in charge" is always present. This implies that someone is in a position of authority or power and that the other party is in a position of dependency. It is this power-dependency relationship which forms the basis for leader-group relations.

A *group* generates power as its power is passed back and forth between the leader and the group. This is called "power balancing" and results from the fact that power resides initially with the group. The chart on the next page (*figure 10*) illustrates the stages through which power and commitment are built and increased between a leader and a group.

The key to building power is the sensing of *interdependence* between group and leader. Negative power, which divides a group or leads it to apathy, results if the group experiences only its own dependence on the leader (Leader: "I'll tell you what to do."), or only its own independence (Leader: "You tell me what you want and decide who will do it.").

When a group is trusted by the leader and is allowed to take responsibility, and experiences achievement and success as a result, it generates power and is ready to move on to new things. When there is a high degree of trust between group and leader and when a group has been able to celebrate some successes there is a greater capacity and willingness to risk new ventures.

The function of leadership, therefore, is to help a group achieve its goals. As a group does this its own self-identity is strengthened and enlarged. It increases the group's awareness of who it is and what its possibilities are. It is enabled to dream new dreams and launch out into new behavior and action.

clarification

The discussion of "Building Power in an Organization" (pages C10-12) points out the four functions which must be fulfilled in sequence as a group goes about its work.

An important responsibility of leadership is to enable a group to move through the four functions in sequence, clarifying what function a group is fulfilling at any particular time. The most important point to be made is that a primary responsibility of leadership is to keep the group focused on the appropriate function. It is essential that as the leader facilitates this process he/she identifies for the group the movement from one function to the next as they progress throughout the cycle.

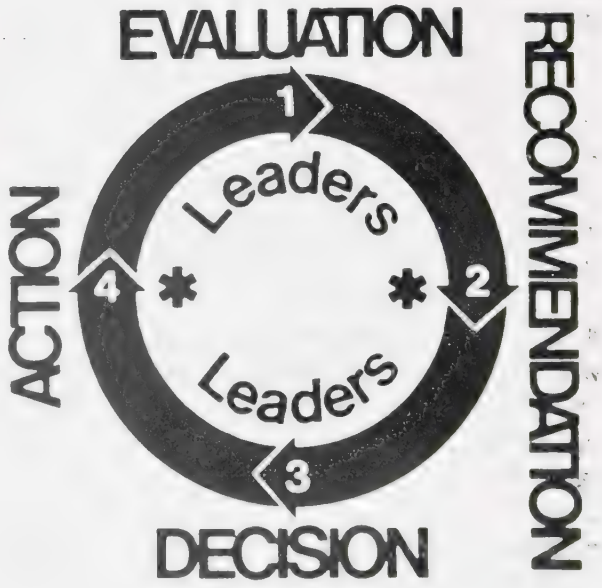
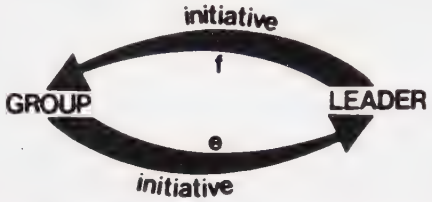


figure 9 the power cycle

the building of power through leader-group relations

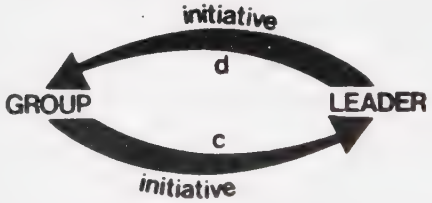
(Read from the bottom of the page to the top)

f. The leader is now in a position to take initiative in suggesting new innovations, to request something hitherto unexpected by the group; in effect, to ask the group to risk seeing some new possibilities, a slightly new identity, new norms. This is possible because "credits" have been built up with them. The leader is empowered. ("I'd like to try something new.") Being asked at this point, the group experiences satisfaction in granting the leader freedom to innovate; they can risk because they are secure. ("We've got a great leader; we're on the move.")



e. The group takes the initiative by engaging in new action and discovers its power to move toward the achievement of its goals. ("We did it; we were able to do what we said we would.") The leader acknowledges their achievement. ("Nice work, we've got a good thing going.")

d. The leader now is able to take new initiative and call for new response from the group, in accordance with its norms and to reach its goal. ("I'm asking you to show support by working along with me.") The group accepts this request. ("We will work along with you.")



c. As things begin to happen the group assumes initiative in acknowledging its feeling of satisfaction with the leader and by conferring status on him/her. ("You're an o.k. leader.") The leader accepts and acknowledges the status offered. ("Thank you for your support.")

b. The leader takes initiative by exhibiting behavior the group values and which honors the norms and expectations. ("I recognize who you are and I will be the kind of leader you need to achieve your goals.") The group perceives that the leader values them.

a. Initially, power resides with the group. The group takes the initiative by sharing with the leader its norms and goals, as well as its expectations of the leader. ("This is who we are and what we want to achieve, and this is the kind of leader we want you to be.") The leader responds to the group's initiative and assumes responsibility to meet their expectations.

figure 10 leader-group relations

leadership styles

To enable a group to build power through the above process, differing conditions of the group call for different leadership styles. Following are descriptions of different group conditions along with the appropriate leadership style.

- **directive style.** A directive leader retains control of the group and its decisions. This leader tells people what they should do and how to do it. Sometimes this style of leadership is known as authoritarian. People with a directive style almost always are more concerned about task than relationships. They think they know what is best for the group. They make up their minds before coming to the group and are not open to change. They feel authorized by the position held or by a personal sense of authority.

  Directive leadership is needed and effective in a crisis or survival situation. When conflict is rampant it may be appropriate for the leader to decide what to do, announce it to the group, and act on the decision without discussion. However, given the present atmosphere in which participation is highly valued, directive leadership will not be an appropriate, helpful, or accepted leadership style except in rare cases.

- **participative style.** The participative leader believes the way to motivate others is to include them in consideration of the issues and decision-making process. This leader provides or assures the presence of the information the group needs and guides the way the group works on the task. The participative style is used when a leader has a stake in the group and its decisions and wants to influence the group's direction without undue coercion. The decisions are left to be made by consensus of the group or majority vote. This style is most effective when groups want to feel ownership and are not threatened. Then they want the leader to enable their work, but also to participate in substance.

- **enabling style.** The enabling leader essentially helps the group maintain good relationships and work on its task without the leader becoming involved in the content or substance of the issue. The enabling leader helps the group by using good group process. When using an enabling style, a leader does not try to influence the decisions of the group. This style is most likely to be used when a leader is invited into a group as an outsider to help them reach a decision.

- **delegating style.** There are times when a leader reaches the point that an individual or group needs only minimal direction and assistance from the leader. As an individual or group becomes knowledgeable about the task and learns to work on it efficiently, the leader delegates tasks and authorizes the work with little or no direct supervision or assistance. The leader may be "on call" but has no need to meet regularly with the individual or the group. The leader may establish checkpoints when the individual or group reports progress.

delegation

The delegation of responsibility is a most important, and often inadequately functioning, step in the successful implementation of plans. Many organizations have experienced frustration and demoralization when a month or two after they made decisions to take specific action they discover that no one has followed through and that nothing has happened.

Delegation concerns responsibility and authority —their assignment to, and their acceptance by, a person or group thereby making the person or group accountable for results. There are four principles of delegation which need to be followed if results are to be expected.

First, the task must be clearly defined. What is to be done and how well it is to be done need to be specifically communicated.

Second, necessary information must be shared. The person or group receiving the responsibility should understand how this particular task fits into the overall program and how it contributes to the achievement of the organization's goals. Pertinent information such as target dates, reporting times, resources available, and the location of additional data should be provided.

Third, commitment must be obtained. If responsibility is assumed to be accepted or if it is accepted with certain conditions, reservations, or hesitancy, it probably will not be carried out.

Fourth, it is necessary to follow-up. A communication channel should be established with reporting dates designated. Periodic checkups will provide both support and motivation for the carrying out of the responsibility.

Fifth, the performance must be credited. Discover ways, both privately and publicly, to honor and give thanks to those who accepted and completed an assignment. Officially agree that the assignment has been completed and nothing further is expected. Provide an opportunity for the responsible person or group to debrief—that is, to talk about the experience, to share what was learned, and to make any suggestions or recommendations about the future.

making decisions

Any group which meets to engage in significant work always is faced with the necessity of making decisions. The way decisions are reached greatly influences how people feel about the decisions and their commitment to them.

Decisions for which there are unanimous agreement and support are most desired. Since this rarely is the case, other forms of reaching decisions are used. In the church and in many other organizations the method most often employed in making official decisions is that of *Robert's Rules of Order.* This model of decision making often forces people to be for or against something and puts them in a win-lose situation with one another. This often is divisive and dissipates energy and commitment rather than building it.

A model of decision making which has proven to be quite effective within the church is that known as consensus. When a consensus decision is reached not everyone is convinced it is the best decision, but everyone has had an opportunity to present his/her views and attempt to influence the decision. Everyone understands why the decision is being made the way it is. The theory behind consensus decision making is that group decisions are better than individual decisions. That is, as all members of a group have an opportunity to share their information and perceptions about an issue the group can make a better, more informed decision than if only a portion of the group exerts influence on the decision.

The decision points in the processes described in *Church Planning* rely on the consensus style of reaching decisions. In the small groups, persons work first individually and then together in such a way that everyone shares the individual work they have done. Decisions are made through discussion and agreement rather than by voting.

In the plenary sessions there is opportunity for clarification. The process of setting priorities which is used at major decision points provides everyone an opportunity to exert an equal influence on the decision. Decisions are reached not by voting "yes" or "no" on an individual's or group's proposal, but rather by placing all proposals on the continuum from most important to least important for the organization at this time. Once the priorities have been determined it is still possible to combine ideas and directions creatively from proposals that did not receive high priority. The work of everyone involved is used to the maximum degree possible.

Given the current decision making requirement in most congregations (which is *Robert's Rules of Order*), it is possible to honor this requirement while taking advantage of the merits of consensus decision making. For example, once priority goals and objectives have been established by a group through a consensus process, then the procedures outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order* may be employed to take official action affirming the consensus agreement.

In making decisions there is one principle which, if followed, will produce better decisions and will create greater commitment to the decisions by those who make them. The principle is simply to consider as many alternatives as possible before arriving at a decision. As more and more alternative possibilities are considered the greater the potential for creative new solutions and answers to appear. The planning processes described in *Church Planning* are designed to provide procedures for considering a wide range of possibilities before a group moves into its decision making role.

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